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THE NEW YORK MONTHLY ▶ JUNE 1990

# SPY

Gene (The Bald One) Siskel  
and Roger (The Fol One) Ebert  
as Themselves

## Whose Is Bigger?

HOW THE CRITICAL  
OPINIONS OF A FEW  
MIDDLE-AGED DWEEBs  
MEAN MILLIONS TO  
MOVIES, RESTAURANTS,  
BOOKS AND BROADWAY

Hey, **#\*@&\*!** Play Ball! THE DODGERS' LASORDA UNEXPURGATED  
Hollywood's Mysterious Instant Mogul: MEET MR. PARRETTI

WHAT DO X-RAY SPEX, THE POMPIDOU  
CENTRE, ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT AND  
PEGGY NOONAN HAVE IN COMMON?



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Hans Holbein The Younger, Henry VIII; Art Resource



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But Forbes reports that liberal Harvard economist Lawrence Lindsey says, thanks to Reagan's tax cuts, not only will the budget be balanced by the mid 90s, but the economy will be generating massive surplusses.

Lindsey says further that more tax cuts are necessary "to preserve the incentive and to avoid giving the politicians money for pork." Obviously not a popular notion on Capitol Hill.

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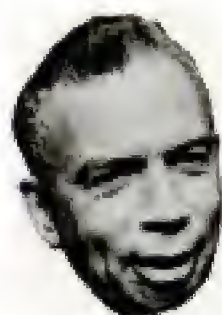
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Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert  
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Styled by Barbara Tfanck.  
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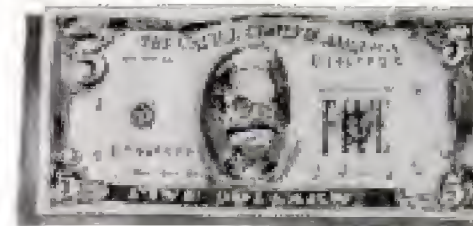


#### MOM ALWAYS LIKED YOU BEST

► *As JAMES KAPLAN points out, sibling rivalry is one of humankind's constants, dating back to Cain and Abel and continuing right on up to LaToya and Michael. HENRY ALFORD makes a case study of Lally Weymouth, the eccentric journalist-socialite-columnist who, unlike her younger brother Donald Graham, is not the heir to the throne of the Washington Post empire ..... 66*

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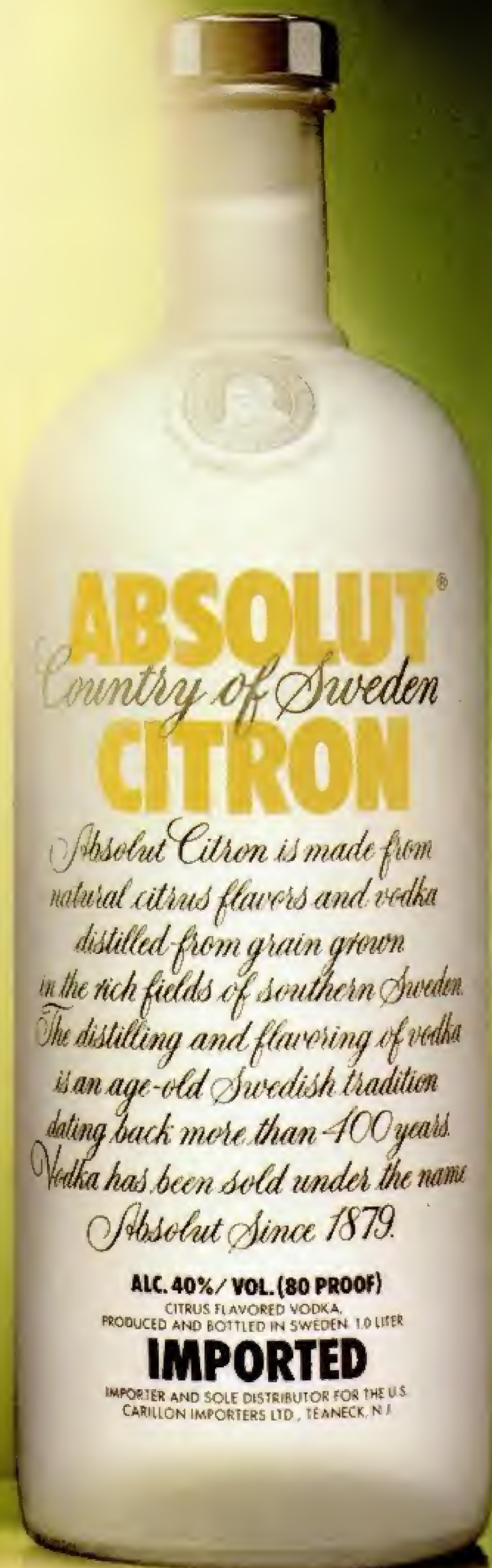
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JUNE IS NEWLY SPRUNG. AND WHAT IS NEWLY SPRUNG IN JUNE? "A RED, red rose," according to the poet Robert Burns, who also mentions "my Luve" but not, incredibly, Ivan Boesky. The newly sprung jailbird (we don't mean Robert Burns—we've already dropped him as a device and are

referring now to Boesky) recently attended the first of six monthly meetings with his probation officer. Rehabilitated? You bet! In this season of good news (Agent Orange is no big deal, global warming has been overstated, Thalidomide may be a miracle drug after all) and this month of upbeat anniversaries (the death of the Ayatollah Khomeini, the deaths of 5,000 students in Tiananmen Square, the births of the first couple—Poppy, June 12; Bar, June 8: *¡Felicidades!*) it would be ornery not to think so. And recent legal proceedings suggest we can look forward to a time, years from now, when Imelda Marcos, Adnan Khashoggi, Leona Helmsley and Al Sharpton, their debts to society paid off, will shake hands with the warden, sling knotted satchels over their shoulders and reemerge in society as fresh-faced, newly sprung rehabilitees. ● If

Boesky's rehabilitation takes, it will be doubtless be he found, or at located, relating down to his Boesky might



bilitation takes, it will be because after his fall the very least briefly gion. But before sit-Talmudic studies have considered an

alternative. According to a recent study, confessionals these days are as empty as Sardi's—only 6 percent of America's Catholics go to confession monthly (Boesky, now accustomed to reporting *somewhere* monthly, could handle that easily). This decline is attributed in part to the nation's growing disbelief in hell, which should tell John Cardinal O'Connor something: if it weren't for those Satan-obsessed heavy-metal bands,

# June is newly sprung

the vacancy rate would be even higher. ● Belief in heaven and hell, incidentally, was not a problem for accountant John List. He arranged to send his family to the former ("Originally I had planned this for Nov. 1—All Saints' Day... I thought it would be an appropriate day for them to get to heaven," he wrote—that is, *confessed*—to his pastor in a letter recently made public after 19 years). And he did it so *considerately*, leaving somber organ music piping through the house as





well as a thoughtful tip that led authorities to one of the bodies ("P.S. Mother is in the hallway in the attic").

Think what hyperbolic, hypersalaried New York newsreader Ernie Anastos could have done with the List family murders if only he'd been a hyperbolic, hypersalaried New York newsreader back in 1971! The \$1-million-a-year WCBS anchor introduced a story recently with what must pass for understatement on local television news: "*It was an afternoon of death and destruction on Manhattan's Upper West Side...*" An ongoing series of unspecified, high-body-yield catastrophes (roaming rooftop snipers?) encompassing dozens of square blocks, beginning shortly after breakfast and lasting late into the evening? Nah—a single fatality in a croissant-shop ceiling collapse.

There are, of course, calmer perspectives on disaster. A young doctor on her lunch break can cross Fifth Avenue, sit down with her brother on a sunny park bench, take a large-caliber bullet in the chest and be called by one doctor a "very, very lucky woman." We think we understand: it *could* have been cloudy, she *could* have got mustard on her lab coat, she and her brother *could* have been mugged. But *none* of these things happened.

Unlucky Lithuanian separatists received a much-needed emotional boost recently when New York's stupid senator, Alfonse D'Amato, bravely traveled to the Soviet Union to face down Mikhail Gorbachev. (Not that he had much else to do here at home, apart from avoiding prosecution.) "I'm going toe-to-toe with the myth," said the modest D'Amato to anyone who would listen—to the *New York Post*, in other words. The partisan tabloid, which obliged the increasingly superfluous senator with a front-page Gorbash-bashing headline (I'LL KICK HIM IN THE BALTICS!), described D'Amato's voice as "dripping with sarcasm" when he said, "It seems to me that one son of an Italian-American family, a senator from the United States, poses little danger to the mighty bear." Al, don't sell yourself short! *The bear is worried.* "How could it do any damage," D'Amato went on, fishing, "*one little Italian-American...*" No, no, Al, don't ever think that way: *the bear is definitely worried.* Or at least your constituents are.



D'Amato—who is Italian-American, incidentally—may eventually be tapped for a space shuttle mission if NASA continues to descend through the evolutionary order in choosing its rocket passengers: first a chimpanzee, then John Glenn, now mosquitoes. Forty of the latter were found aboard *Discovery* as the shuttle was being prepared for its April launch at Cape Canaveral. Were these mosquitoes handpicked survivors of a selection process no less rigorous simply because the applicants happen to be tiny blood-sucking insects, and not astronauts? Maybe. But the chronology of the incident—(1) mosquitoes discovered aboard; (2) mosquitoes forced to disembark; (3) \$2.1 billion Hubble Space Telescope installed in place of mosquitoes—suggests another reason for their presence: joyriding. The thrill-seeking insects probably had arranged themselves into a shape approximating the dimensions and look of the Hubble Space Telescope, and were simply hoping for the best.

More unauthorized passengers are in the offing, and they're not necessarily any more welcome than stowaway space mosquitoes. The Coca-Cola Company is filling random 12-ounce cans with water instead of cola and placing a mechanism inside them that, when the cans are opened, will spurt cash—actual bills, in denominations of \$1 to \$100, curled up and kept miraculously dry. These are presumably redeemable for the soda you wanted in the first place. This is what prize winning has come to: zero-sum fun.

Speaking of windfalls, Donald Trump could give Ivana what she wants—\$2.5-billion—and *still* have more than enough left over to buy, for example, his very own Hubble Space Telescope. Yet his "people" have taken a dim view of Ivana's claim to half the Trump fortune. "It's this kind of greed I find contemptible," said Jay Goldberg, a lawyer for Donald.

Trump, Trump, Trump. About the only story Trump's name hasn't been dragged into recently—and it could have been, no, *should* have been—is the controversy over the restoration of the Sistine Chapel ceil-

ing. The art historians went at it like professional hockey players. "A Watergate situation...a lot of sleaze," charged one opponent of the work. "The critics' claims sound more and more like the wild cries of some ferocious mutant of Chicken Little," responded a supporter of the cleanup. No consensus on what the spiffed-up Michelangelo should look like, yet all the while a simple solution was staring the experts in the face—or *would* have been had they been lying supine on the floor of Donald and Ivana's erstwhile loveplex at Trump Tower. The Trump ceiling, after all, has a "Michelangelo-style" mural about which Donald has said, "If this were on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, it would be very much in place in terms of quality." In terms of points of reference, can you get any more top than that?

Finally, on the Axis-powers watch, it's worth noting that Italy's Communist Party is now calling itself "The Thing" and that poet and dramatist Amiri Baraka, who used to call himself LeRoi Jones, is now calling his English-department colleagues at Rutgers "Nazis." The first suggests a worsening self-image, if not unabashed self-loathing; the second suggests that the Rutgers faculty dining room has probably seen jollier days. But what is to be deduced from Sony's curious, one-chance-in-365 selection of *December 7* as the sample date used in its manual to explain how to set the clock on its VCRs? A Florida man, the son of an American soldier who died at Pearl Harbor, complained about it; Sony apologized. After all, there are



many, many possible explanations why a Japanese company, with American consumers in mind, would bring up the date

December 7. After all, it's Gregg Allman's birthday. *And* the anniversary of Delaware's unanimous ratification of the Constitution. *And* the date the List murders were discovered.

If any of those explanations seems plausible to you, you're more newly sprung than June, red roses, Robert Burns's luv or Ivan Boesky. ☛





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From the SPY mailroom: One little fashion supplement and, as we knew they would, out come the clubs and switchblades. Judging from some of the recent mail, our March issue consisted entirely of a front cover, a 600-page advertising



section on style (which readers were apparently forced to read by SPY employees who broke into their homes and stood over them, waving revolvers), articles about nubbins and a back cover.

You all sound so wronged. Well, you're just not going to get us to defend that supplement. Despite what you may have read there, the relative fashion-hepness of SPY readers is fairly low on our list of concerns, ranking somewhere below Bryant Gumbel's possible job dissatisfaction. (To our thicker readers: The preceding does not mean that it matters to us whether Bryant is happy in his work; it means the opposite.) So if you want to read about the clothes (and accessories!), or buy them, fine. It happens that we don't care what you wear when you're reading SPY, as long as it's not that unbecoming, betrayed-looking pout some of you have on right now.

Besides, there are more important matters at hand. Minneapolis reader Dean Otto's declaration of "undying love for Quinn Cummings" must be acknowledged, if only because we liked the way he addressed his envelope to "Those Editors." He asked if we could set him up on a "dream date" with Cummings, who, you'll remember, played Marsha Mason's cloyingly precocious daughter in *The Goodbye Girl*. This, of course, reminded us of Gena Feist of New Paltz, New York, and her request for a date with Elvis Costello (this space, January). Which in turn reminded us that Feist later wrote to insist that her appeal—for which she was not charged by the line—was "Elvis Costello-specific." In other words, stop calling Gena Feist, all you guys who aren't Elvis Costello.

Sadly, Feist has written yet again, this time to complain about—that's right—the fashion supplement. She is apparently one of those very realistic readers who like their satirical monthlies volunteer-staffed, income-resistant and ▶

DEAR EDITORS It was a pleasure to work with the truly professional people at SPY and a great ego boost to be saluted in your December 1989 issue as a "Star of Tomorrow."

On at least a half dozen occasions people in both my public and private lives have contacted me to offer congratulations. And nothing could have served as well as coming into a new play's first reading and having a fellow actor comment, in front of producer, director, cast and crew, that he'd come across the feature and how did I manage such a coup?

If the gods are kind, we'll get a chance to work together again.

*Tony Kruk  
Bethpage, New York*

DEAR EDITORS Alex Heard's "Embarrassment of Riches—Certain Riches, Anyway" [January 1990] reminded me of an incident at my alma mater, Saint Leo College in Florida (about a half hour from Tampa).

The Benedictines started the school as a military school. About 30 years later it became an all-boys preparatory school. During that time the late Lee Marvin was a student. He left the school after throwing a student out of a window. The prep school soon became a four-year, coed college, and in 1969 the Benedictines transferred control of the college to a board of trustees.

In 1969 the college gave Lee Marvin an honorary degree in the hope that he would donate a huge chunk of money. Marvin showed up for the graduating ceremonies and gave a nice speech. The col-

lege also had one of the residence halls named Lee Marvin Hall. Marvin never gave a dime to the college, much to their chagrin. So when he was subsequently hit with a palimony suit, the college, acting very holier-than-thou, changed the name of the residence hall to Henderson, after a former student who'd died of cancer and whose parents had donated money to the college in his memory.

Many people do not know that the Benedictines transferred control of the college in 1969, and because St. Leo Abbey is located in the middle of the campus, the college receives many donations from people who believe they are

giving to a Catholic college. The college reinforced this notion by having the Abbey in their brochures and calling themselves a college with a "Catholic tradition." A very clever way to raise money.

*Jim Porto  
Seneca Falls, New York*

DEAR EDITORS Thank you for responding to my request for information on lip augmentation, mentioned in your article "Looking Good—Unnaturally Good: A SPY Surgical History of Celebrity, Volume I" [January].

I contacted Dr. Stephen Pinkus through his publicist, Michael Sands, as you suggested. The doctor explained his procedure, which is new, and agreed to look at photographs of me to determine whether my problem could be helped by his augmentation method.

I really do appreciate your courtesy and consideration. My husband often says, "What goes around comes around." So maybe I'll be able to repay the favor.

*Carolyn R. Imboden  
Atlanta, Georgia*

DEAR EDITORS David Owen's foreshadowing of the 1989 San Francisco earthquake and resulting damage to I-880 [Ten Years Ago in SPY, February] was incredible.

What is even more astounding, and probably lost on your readers from outside the Bay Area, is that Owen's 1980 premonition about I-880 was conceived on a stretch of road then known as California Highway 17. Route

17 was not renamed I-880 until 1986.

Also, I suspect that if Owen and Rickey Henderson were "headed over into Oakland" on Highway 17, they'd have been on the upper deck, heading south, not the lower deck. Was your fact checker injured seriously in the quake?

*Eli Messinger  
San Jose, California*

DEAR EDITORS David Owen's 1980 musings about the structural dangers of I-880 in Oakland are—sorry, *were*—even more prescient than you might imagine, since the

## LETTERS TO SPY



expense-free. Her unstated offer—or are we reading too much into your letter, Gena?—is that she is willing to underwrite SPY. Until that happens, no one should be surprised if our first match-making efforts proceed along lines that are more Otto-Cummingsian than, say, Feist-Castelloic.

John Lasater of Tyler, Texas, under the impression that we are a panel of presidential aspirants and not a shaded gray column near the front of a magazine, has submitted eight questions on a variety of subjects. Not even his flattering assurance that “only your magazine could answer [these questions]” will get us to research them. We’d rather spend time reading more hostile mail.

Richard Hicks wants to know how many SPY subscribers there are in Fresno. Hicks, thank goodness, lives in Fresno himself, or his letter would have struck us as odd—or rather, even odder. There are 64 subscribers in greater Fresno, Mr. Hicks. Counting you.

Marye Bigler of Greenbrook, New Jersey, has written us a lovely letter in flowing script. She concludes with the tantalizing revelation that “I figured out who bought up all your [March] magazines...*The Prices!*” But how can that be, Marye? Peter and Judy Price (“Wicked Boss of the East: Nightmare on Park Avenue,” by Jenet Conant) have denied it. (Incidentally, Marye, you should absolutely have your talented daughter get in touch with us, if she hasn’t already. You say she has written “some way-out articles,” and it occurs to us that that’s kind of what we do. As you know. Thanks also for not forgetting to tell us the names of her cats.)

“Thought you might like to see references to both Donald Trump and SPY magazine in the Charlottesville, Virginia, magazine,” writes William G. Chapman, editor of *C-Ville Review*, the publication in question. Thanks, Bill. But there’s one clipping you forgot to enclose: the *C-Ville Review*’s suspiciously SPY-like list-o’-names feature called “The List.” Fortunately, Jamie “Benedict” Berger, also of Charlottesville, thought to send us a copy. You’ll be hearing from our attorneys. Not you, Jamie. Bill.

Was the musical *High Society* on TV sometime in late February? For about a week there, it was impossible to hold a

conversation around the office without being interrupted by an obsequious mail-room employee (yes, they “sir” and “ma’am” us here—we believe in that) handing over yet another batch of letters asking whether the *Spy* magazine in *High Society* is where SPY got its name. Okay, we’re exaggerating a little; we got two such letters. So, to answer Teresa Marquand of Huntsville, Alabama, and Neil Mack of Manhattan: Sort of. (Hint: *High Society* was a musical remake of...)

It would mean a lot to us if someone would mail a cruise brochure for the Silja Line (which travels between Sweden and Finland) to Jim Fuhrman of West Hollywood. It might just get him to stop documenting for us how many phone numbers he’s had to call trying to track one down. Why do people involve us in these things? Christine Selk of Iowa City, encouraged by the public-service aspect of our regular Letters to the Editor of *The New Yorker* section, has asked us to tell her erstwhile boyfriend that “you really CAN stick a knife in a toaster when it’s plugged in!!! Running with scissors is perfectly FINE!!! And I ENCOURAGE swimming right after a heavy meal.” And Barry Popik of Manhattan has been hearing voices—well, Burgess Meredith’s voice. He swears it was on a commercial for *The Threepenny Opera*. He is convinced Meredith is dead, and he wants us to “straighten this out.” This is in reference to what article in SPY, Barry? But okay, Meredith is indeed alive as this column goes to press. He can also be heard doing the voice-overs for Honda and Drixoral television ads.

McLean Brice, currently of Federal Prison Camp, Maxwell Air Force Base, in Montgomery, Alabama, has written to express empathy with “the dreadful plight of Nelson Barry.” We assume he means Barry Nelson, the Florida incarcerated whose issues of SPY are routinely confiscated by the authorities (this space, March). Mr. Brice, who also goes by the name 06936-021, mentions in his letter that at Maxwell, prisoners are allowed to receive *Hustler* and *Thrasher*; that “we’re all praying that Mike Milken is going to beat his rap”; and that Jim Bakker’s being sent to prison in Minnesota was considered at Maxwell “a snub which continues to fester amongst some of the guys down here.” But we ▶

number 880 wasn’t applied to that road until 1985.

Angus MacDonald  
Concord, California

DEAR EDITORS **A**nyone in San Francisco could have told you that the collapsed structure was called Highway 17 until 1988.

Bill Rutledge  
San Francisco, California

Anyone in San Francisco, Bill? In fact, as anyone in San Jose or Concord could’ve told you, it was renamed in 1985 and the road signs were all changed by 1986. Well, anyway, we’ll try to get it right in *Eleven Years Ago* in SPY.

DEAR EDITORS **I** find your references to the I-880 earthquake collapse and the Montreal shootings [Great Expectations, February] disturbing and cold.

Spoofing the antics of the arrogant and self-important makes for a great and funny read, but a laugh at the expense of disaster and psycho-killer victims is the worst kind of frat-house thoughtlessness.

I have really enjoyed your magazine up to now, but don’t start thinking you’re immortal and untouchable. Some events just aren’t humorous.

Todd Michaels  
Hollywood, California

DEAR EDITORS **I**n the column accompanying the February Un-British Crossword, Roy Blount Jr. ignores the very real possibility that the Garfield doll that deflected a bullet fired into a truck might have been the actual target of the gunman all along. Sure, this time the family in question was lucky. They picked a cartoon character whose position on gun control has never been clearly stated. But think of the senseless tragedy that could have resulted if there had been a Ted Kennedy or even a Sarah Brady doll hanging in their truck’s back window instead. Clearly all Americans need to install a Charlton Heston doll in their back window, so that we can finally show these creeps we mean business.

Eric Iverson  
Las Cruces, New Mexico



BARNEYS  
NEW YORK

POUR  
MONSIEUR

EAU DE TOILETTE  
CONCENTRÉE  
SPRAY

CHANEL



POUR  
MONSIEUR



DEAR EDITORS Joe Queenan's "Joyride: How I Parlayed the Editorship of Three Horrible Publications Into a Half Decade of Free Food, Free Travel and Pointless Conversation With the Leaders of the Free World" [February] is brilliant. It's in a class with the best we ever did at the *Lampoon*.

And Ellis Weiner's always great.

*Leonard Mogel*

*Cofounder and former publisher*

*National Lampoon*

*Westlake Village, California*

DEAR EDITORS As a former "Amy," I was delighted to read Joe Queenan's delicious celebration-cum-exposé of the PR industry. In my seven months as a high-tech PR hack I may have personally invited him to any number of worthless press conferences, posh luncheons and other luxurious junkets designed to get my firm's clients' names OUT THERE.

While I agree that the architects of all this mad, pointless profligacy are the PR executives, I feel honor-bound to point out that those executives, who drive

BMW's and Jaguars while their lowly Amys struggle along with manual typewriters, rotary phones and public transportation, are hardly the true culprits. Blame for Queenan's endless calendar of banal interviews lies with all those gullible, egocentric executives of the Shipbuilders' Council, AI corporations and so on, who think they can cut advertising costs by relying on PR.

It's reassuring to know someone else has profited from the greed and self-seriousness that dog this particular gravy train, and it's encouraging to think some corporate head somewhere might read Queenan's article and realize that the endless parade of bodies, phone calls, shoddily produced press releases and canapés merely perpetuates a worthless industry, lining charlatans' pockets.

*Diane Walker*

*Issaquah, Washington*

*Well, it took three and a half years, but we've finally heard from the entire population of Issaquah.*

DEAR EDITORS

It was heartening to read of SPY's Re-uze-

it!™ program, the "new" plan you supposedly unveiled in the March Letters section and in which you print all environment-related stories on recycled paper. But you were being modest. You might have mentioned Joe Queenan's February feature, which recycled the premise of Queenan's "Freeloader's Diary" from the December 1987 SPY. That you were able to eke out nearly eight pages of copy from an idea that in its first incarnation sustained only one and a third pages is a challenge to the first law of thermodynamics that you really shouldn't be shy about sharing with your fellow travelers on Spaceship Earth.

*Josh Gillette*

*New York*

*The first Queenan piece you mention was a column about cadging food. The second piece, "Joyride," was about cadging everything else. So what you're saying, then, Josh, is that we shouldn't run any subsequent letters you might write to us—no matter what the subject?*

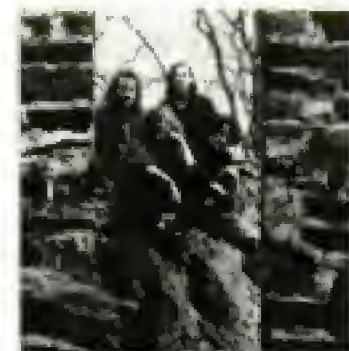
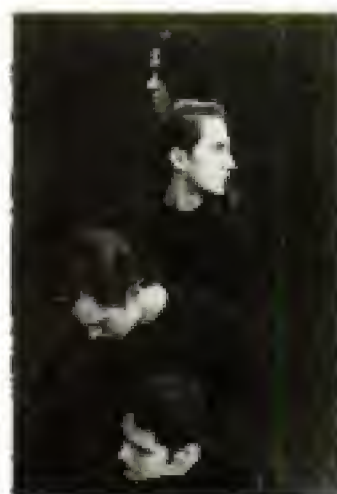
DEAR EDITORS

I loved Jamie Malanowski's article

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These sand poets from La Jolla beach have the music industry buzzing with their plaintive, mercurial debut album of the same name. Alienated youth has found its manifesto. **THE ORIGIN** featuring "Growing Old."



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liked 06936-021's sign-off the best: "P.S. What's the deal with the escape decal?" If we were to tell you, 069—we feel we've known you long enough now to call you that—you'd never see this issue.

A few follow-ups:

One of the more satisfying things to emerge from the Trump separation saga was the exposure of publicity flack Chuck Jones, the man we used to call to cadge tickets to the Friars Club's Man of the Year roasts; we now understand the precise nature of his publicity-flackhood. Jones had scolded SPY in a letter (September 1989) for picking on the Trumps. "Instead of commissioning tacky stories, the magazine should spend its money to obtain the services of a better printer," he'd railed, putting us in our place. "For all the ink you gave the Trumps, most of it came off on my hands." When we called him at the time, Jones denied having ever been employed by the Trumps; we suggested in our printed reply that at the very least he would like to be. Sure enough, several months later Jones surfaced as a member of Donald Trump's extended family, as Marla Maples's "manager." And then it was revealed that, yes, he was on Trump's payroll. One calculating letter to SPY, and the sky's the limit.

Our readers enjoyed our February polka map ("This Land Is Your Land, Bobby Vinton," by John Brodie) so much that some of them apparently sent it to friends in Detroit. One of these wrote us with what certainly qualifies as an addendum: although Hamtramck, Michigan, was included on the map, Hamtramck's New Polka Bakery was not. A shameful oversight.

Out in Seattle, Taso Lagos can finally relax, having feverishly scanned the first 1,700 words of this column for his name. His recent two-page, single-spaced letter to us wasn't even very hostile by Taso Lagos standards, although it did begin with "You realize, of course, this means war." Mostly it was just a reminiscence of the whole Lagos affair, a sort of "The Year in Lagos." We have been through a lot together, haven't we, Taso? Maybe it's time for you to go wherever Jason de Menil and the Halbfingers (not the doo-wop group, the SPY readers) have gone. And where Gena Feist may also soon be headed. Without Elvis Costello. ☺

"Peace on Earth—and Jeane Kirkpatrick Is Out of a Job: A Speculative History of Post-Cold War America, 1989–2013" [March], but I think one Cold War relic was left unexamined. What will insurance salesman-cum-military-industrial-complex novelist Tom Clancy do now that the Cold War is over? Will he return to his former profession?

Frances M. Codd

Staten Island, New York

*Sadly, no. After the end of the Cold War, Clancy went into show business as a Roy Orbison impersonator. In 1998 he retired to his home in Annapolis, Maryland.*

DEAR EDITORS I thoroughly enjoyed "Wicked Boss of the West: Mr. Simpson, Your Slut Is on Line 3" [by August West, March]. Is the author the same August West chronicled in the Grateful Dead song "Wharf Rat"? If so, his fortunes must have greatly improved since his days on the docks. What a long, strange trip that must have been.

Mark J. Schoifet

New York

*No, the Dead's August West was the one who wrote "News at 11, Facts a Little Later" in the April 1987 SPY.*

DEAR EDITORS I found your article "Wicked Boss of the East: Nightmare on Park Avenue" [by Jennet Conant, March] petty, mean-spirited, vulgar and vindictive. Interesting that the author exhibits the same traits she accuses Judy Price of possessing.

Bruce J. Rubin

New York

DEAR EDITORS I've known Judy Price since 1967, when she was a researcher in business news at *Time*, and the woman you wrote about is not the kind, generous and thoughtful person I know. Is it possible we are talking about the same person?

John Guenther

New York

*Ask Judy's mother—see this space, April.*

DEAR EDITORS After reading all the dirt on Avenue president Judy Price, I fully appreciate

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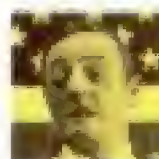
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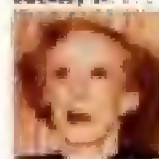
Good  
Clean  
Fun



William F.  
Buckley Jr.



and Gomer Pyle?



Bette Davis...



and the tree in  
The Wizard of Oz?



Julian Lennon...



and Tiffany?

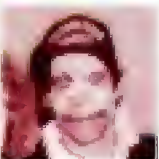


Leona Helmsley...



and the Joker?

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Gordie Brown...



and Bore the  
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why outgoing editor Joan Kron told friends that "it was time to re-pot myself." But let's put writer Jenet Conant's limited ability as a media critic into some perspective:

- ▶ A lot of talented writers (Pulitzer-winning commentator Manuela Hoelterhoff of *The Wall Street Journal*, for example) have written for the magazine without any Price controls;

- ▶ With articles on fashion, design, architecture, life-styles and the arts, *Avenue* competes for advertising against Conant's [former] employer, *Manhattan, inc.*, which the *Columbia Journalism Review* dubbed a "Yuppie Power Tool";

- ▶ Like *SPY*, *Avenue* has poked fun at some of the grotesquely pretentious rich and powerful people lionized or glamorized by *Manhattan, inc.* over the years;

- ▶ After belaboring *Avenue's* practice of selling ad space below prices on its rate card (like a number of other magazines), Conant fails to offer any persuasive analysis of *Avenue's* financial condition.

Don't get me wrong. Your cheeky coverage of the media and entertainment industries is still a must-read, especially articles like Joe Queenan's extraordinarily confessional "Joyride," which no doubt made his former employers at *Forbes* and *Barron's* glad to be rid of him. But after turning from Conant's hatchet job on *Avenue* to the *Avenue*-like ads in *SPY's* March fashion supplement, I would hope you tune up your bullshit detector.

Stephen J. Govoni  
New York

*Editors' note: Mr. Govoni has written three articles for Avenue in the last year and a half.*

DEAR EDITORS **H**ere's something interesting — similar articles in *SPY* and *National Lampoon*. I am referring to the pieces on celebrity fan clubs in the March *SPY* ["Why Do I Like Gumby? Well, He's Really Down-to-earth," by John F. Kelly] and the April *Lampoon*. But does the "Simply Simon" group have 70 members, as reported in *SPY*, or 150, as alleged by *Lampoon*? And did you notice a certain New York monthly featured prominently (albeit as a piece of beach trash) on *Lampoon's* cover?

Jim Krusas

Syracuse, New York

*This never would have happened in Len*

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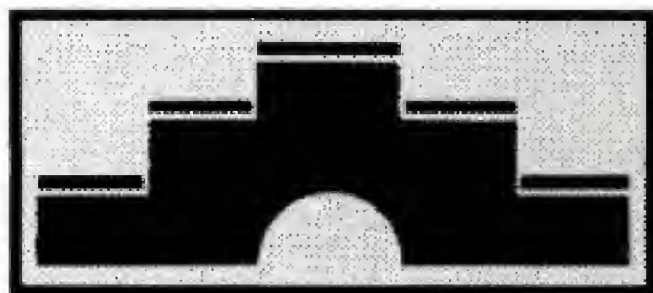
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- 4.** It has the hippest ad campaign you've ever seen.
- 3.** The 24-hour concierge desk has a fax machine so you can send requests to WNEW-FM.
- 2.** They have Spy Magazine on the coffee table in one of the model apartments.
- 1.** It's cheap.

*Mogel's day. As everyone in the industry knows, there are precisely 70 members in the Simon MacCorkindale Fan Club.*

DEAR EDITORS

It was with no small degree of disappointment that I read "My Task Force, Myself" [by Jess Bravin, March].

I was deeply disturbed by SPY's portrayal of Democratic assemblyman John Vasconcellos as a smarmy purveyor of puerile dialectic—in essence a corrupt, vacuous, grandiloquent idiot fired with a passion to irresponsibly gorge at the public trough in the manner of a tax-fattened hyena. C'mon, guys, he's a Democrat—that's his job description.

Consider a state that survived "Travelin' Sam" Yorty as mayor of Los Angeles, and Jerry Brown, a transcendental guru with a five o'clock shadow, as governor. Can we truly find it in our hearts to condemn a Spanish-surnamed political hack helping himself to the pie so often sliced by the traditional white establishment? I look forward to that proud, proud day when Asians, Hispanics, blacks, Native Americans and even Australian bushmen can plunder the public coffers at will, building subways and freeways and monorails, and catching a little piece of the action for themselves. That is America.

Alan M. Schwartz  
Costa Mesa, California

DEAR EDITORS

I am very disappointed by Ann Hodgman's March Eating column. I can't believe she wrote an article on macadamia nuts and neglected to comment on their most infamous side effect, flatulence! An article on macadamia nuts in *The New York Times's* Food section might be forgiven for not mentioning this, but can a piece in SPY be given the same amount of rope? I don't think so.

If you'd allow me to respond with an anagram:

**THE ULTIMATE NUT IN MARCH SPY?**  
**THEY STUN ME. PUT IN TAIL CHARM!**

James V. Horrigan  
Aide to Jacqueline Lewis  
Massachusetts House of Representatives  
Dedham, Massachusetts

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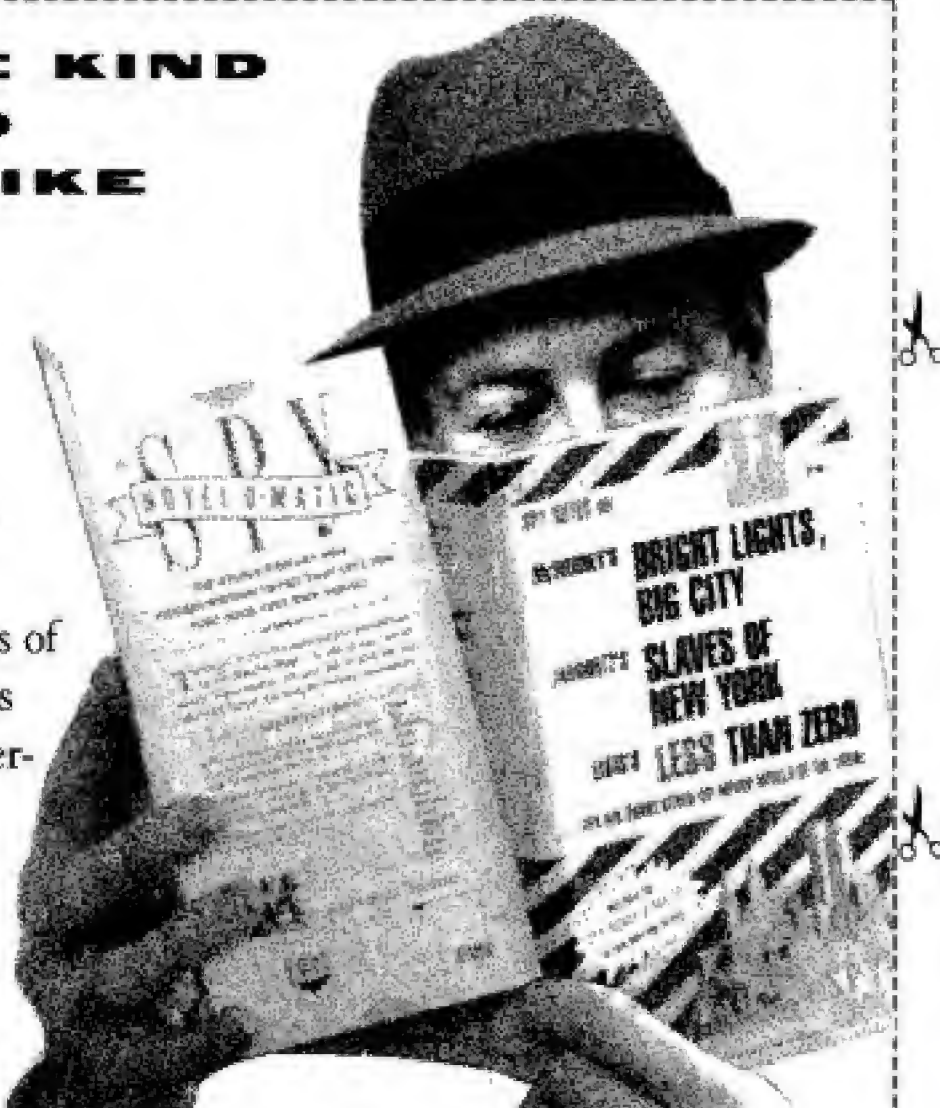
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SPY NOTES will enlighten those in search of pop cultural literacy, amuse the skeptical and astonish the naive.





DEAR EDITORS In your March Trip Tip ["Where Playing to Win Was Born," by John Brodie] you tell readers they can get to Donald Trump's boyhood home by taking the E or F train to 179th Street. This advice would get half your readers lost—the E train hasn't gone to 179th Street since the line was extended to Jamaica Center; 179th Street is now served by the F and R trains. Please get yourselves a new subway map.

Daniel Kulkosky  
New York

DEAR EDITORS There is an error in the March Datebook. Philadelphia has the fifth-largest population in the U.S., not the fourth-largest. It was surpassed by Houston a decade ago.

Paul Lerner  
New York

Mr. Kulkosky: You've already been to visit Donald Trump's boyhood home? Mr. Lerner: Okay—what's the capital of Burkina Faso?

DEAR EDITORS This is to inform you that the Committee

to Continue Crossword Purity (CCCP) is contemplating legal action against both SPY magazine and its lackey Roy Blount Jr. for negligent publication of an asymmetrical crossword puzzle in March. Frankly, a man whose name is an anagram for *runty lobo* should be more careful not to offend people with a facility for rearranging letters to reveal inner truth.

Soga Losat  
Boston, Massachusetts

DEAR EDITORS I was quite disappointed in the March crossword. The puzzle was not rotationally symmetric, contrary to the universally accepted rules set down by the Amateur Crossword Puzzle League of America in 1924. Every other crossword puzzle in a respectable publication since the puzzle was invented has followed this simple and aesthetically pleasing symmetry rule. All Blount had to do was black out square 22, or make the answer to 8 Down, *horde*, one character longer. One painfully easy way to do this would have been to change it to *hordes*.

Why was Blount being so lazy? A man whose name is an anagram for *runty lobo* should be more careful not to offend people with a facility for rearranging letters to reveal inner truth.

Gary Sabot  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

DEAR EDITORS Did anyone else write in about the March puzzle? I got a headache just looking at it. When I tried to answer the first few clues, all that came to mind was how—well, *unbalanced* everything seemed.

I showed the puzzle to my neighbor, who's quite good at crosswords. In fact, he sits on the board of a big crossword puzzle committee, or something like that. He became furious, turning beet-red and yelling something about "where is the rotational summitry!" I was sorry I'd brought the whole thing up. A man whose name is an anagram for *runty lobo* should be more careful not to offend people with a facility for rearranging letters to reveal inner truth.

Brian Silverman  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
Roy Blount replies, "No matter how smart

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they are, or think they are (Brian Silverman is a clumsy anagram of Brain Silverman), fanatical terrorists who feign familiarity with American institutions (such as the Un-British Crossword) in order to overthrow them (I am not exaggerating, believe me—I wish I were) always give themselves away.

"Little slips, here and there:

- awkward camouflaging of names (I would not be surprised to learn that Losat and Batyr Soga, aka 'Soga Losat' and 'Gary Sobat,' are one and the same person, or at most twins);

- identical language, if you will notice, in all three letters ('A man whose name is... inner truth');

- telltale impertinence

"Soga (or the Sogas) and his (or their) confederate, the so-called Brain, may not be anti-Un-British agents as such. They may merely be playing at a dangerous game. Soga Losat is, of course, Taso Lagos backward, so if anyone by that name exists, there may be an attempt here to set him up as a scapegoat. But what are the underlying issues? Asymmetry is as American as William Carlos Williams, rock 'n' roll, the Mississippi, JuJuBes or, unfortunately, Nixon. Whereas symmetry is British: pip pip; Ford Madox Ford; Sunday, Bloody Sunday; arf 'n' arf.

"Unless I miss my guess, these are some of the same people who duped T. S. Eliot into leaving St. Louis, abandoning bold new verse forms and writing Cats."

DEAR EDITORS **M**arla Maples confided in me about a year ago that Donald and Ivana Trump were in trouble matrimonially and wouldn't be around much longer. I chided the blond, bosomy bimbo, of whom I am not particularly fond, that she shouldn't indulge in wishful thinking. She said, "No, you'll find this is true if you just investigate. I predict they won't even be around in a year."

Just thought you'd like to know.

Lynn Malchow  
 Hollywood, California

SPY welcomes letters from its readers. Address correspondence to SPY, The SPY Building, 5 Union Square West, New York, N.Y. 10003. Please include your daytime telephone number. Typewritten letters are preferred. Letters may be edited for length or clarity. ☺





**September 1988**  
**LIFE-STYLE HELL! OUR SPECIAL LOS ANGELES ISSUE**

"The sex, the spandex, the pastels, the car phones, the irony shortage and the general uncensored dudeosity that make Los Angeles a shrine to vapid fun."

**December 1988**  
**SEVENTIES-SOMETHING**

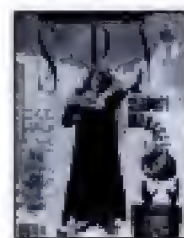
"A return to the decade of the mood rings, ultrasuede, sideburns and disco sex-machine Tony Orlando."



**January/February 1989**  
**MR. STUPID GOES TO WASHINGTON**  
"America's ten dopiast law-makers—all those in favor, say *dub*."

**March 1989**  
**ISN'T IT IRONIC?**

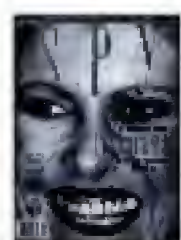
"How everything in the world turned 'funny'—from Joe Franklin to Joey Heatherton, Twister to Twinkies and Hawaiian shirts to Hawaii Five-O."



**April 1989**  
**CELEBRITY GARBAGE**  
"Coffee grounds of the rich and interoffice memos of the famous—a scientific, sanitary and not at all unseemly SPY investigation."

**May 1989**  
**IVANARAMA!**

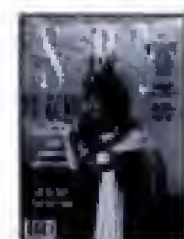
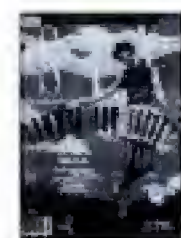
"You know her as an Olympic skier, fashion leader, licensed interior designer, hotel executive and wife to a certain billionaire casino operator from Queens. But of course, there's more. With Ivana, there's *always* more."



**June 1989**  
**LET'S MAKE A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL!**  
"Ed Koch did it. Time Inc. did it. Barbara Walters did it. A SPY audit of Faustian bargains, Mephistophelian transactions and the current bull market for selling one's soul."

**July 1989**  
**SUMMER FUN ISSUE!**

"A really, really long article about William F. Buckley Jr.! Ugly Europeans! How to make Twinkies!"



**August 1989**  
**WHO WAS WHO**  
"How time travel could really work. Awful moviemaking with Dino DeLaurentiis. Plus, the super-salacious pullout index to *The Andy Warhol Diaries*!"

**September 1989**  
**VILLAGE IDIOTS**

"Smart girls in chains—the shame of *The New Yorker*! Conjugal networking in Hollywood."

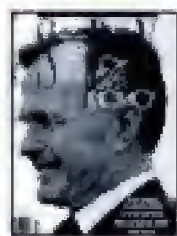


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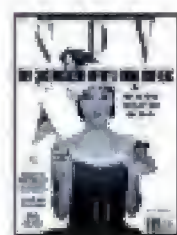
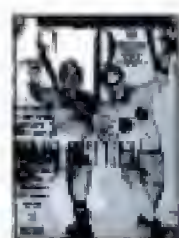
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**October 1989**  
**THE SPY 100**  
"Our annual census of the 100 most annoying, alarming and appalling people, places and things."

**November 1989**

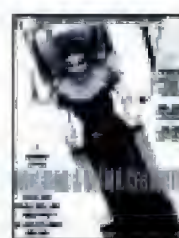
**WILD AND CRAZY V.I.P.'s!**  
"SPY goes undercover to Bohemian Grove. Plus, superspecial keepsake facsimile edition of SPY's 1964 debut issue!"



**December 1989**  
**BUY THIS MAGAZINE OR WE'LL BURN THIS FLAG**  
"The most hated man in fashion. SPY's guide to year-end bribery."

**January 1990**

**BUILDING A BETTER CELEBRITY**  
"SPY's nationwide, statistically valid poll reveals what America wants from its celebrities! Plus, the Ovitz-Eszterhas letters."



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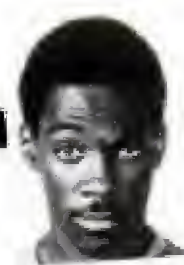
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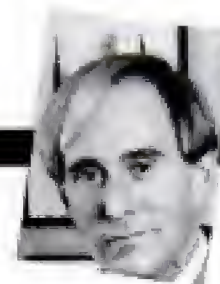


## aked city

### THE USUAL SUSPECTS



E. MURPHY



R. STONE



S. I. NEWHOUSE

## THE FINE PRINT

by Jamie Malanowski

### I BOUGHT IT FROM THE JUNKMAN

To everything, we've heard it said, there is a season: a time to plant, a time to reap; a time to cast away stones, a time to gather stones together; a time to go to the movies, a time to wait for the videocassette; a time to amass assets, a time to sell off assets in order to satisfy one's obligations to the IRS. That last turn of the wheel recently came to Redd Foxx, the star of one of Norman Lear's less palatable 1970s sitcoms, who somehow fell in arrears to the IRS, to the extent that the government forced him to put up a vast portion of his worldly goods at auction. Foxx won a reprieve at the last moment, but not before his possessions were displayed for the world to see. Below, a selected inventory of the goods a run-of-the-mill show business multimillionaire accumulates.

**Vehicles:** a 1978 Jeep Cherokee; a 1974 Mercedes 450SL coupe; a 1975 Panther; a 1926 Model T Ford (no rear bumper); a 1983 Zimmer Golden Spirit; a 1947 Cadillac sedan (lacking some glass and all its chrome); a 1974 Honda motorcycle; a 1974 Piaggio 125 Primavera ▶

HOLLYWOOD'S FORMIDABLE THUG contingent was out in force at a recent birthday bash thrown by sharkish producer **JOEL SILVER** for his improbably well compensated *Die Hard* star **BRUCE WILLIS**. In tribute to Willis's slumming-frat-boy persona, not to mention his own exaggerated flair for southern California pop vulgarity, Silver chose a bowling alley as the party's venue. For invitations, the host sent out personalized bowling shirts with the words **BRUNO'S BOWLING ALLEY** on the back and the invitee's name on the front. While most lucky guests, such as lummoxy action toy **SYLVESTER STALLONE**, gamely complied with Silver's demand that they wear the shirts to gain entrance, ultracool individualist **EDDIE MURPHY** refused. He arrived at the bowling alley in his own, no doubt very tasteful clothes, while a member of his entourage followed along behind bearing the scorned **EDDIE** shirt on a hanger.

THE VCR IN THE OFFICE of the loathsome young Republican political consultant **ROGER STONE** hums almost continuously these days. Prototypes of misleading campaign ads that will be beamed into our homes this fall? No. Newsclips reviewing his firm's involvement in the HUD scandal? No. The speeches of **ADOLF HITLER**? Only sometimes, actually. What shows up most often are rather mundane skin flicks, the sort of tawdry epics that **RONALD REAGAN** and **GEORGE BUSH** and other Stone clients regularly inveigh against. But just because Stone watches these movies doesn't mean he isn't mindful of the need to maintain appearances—this is Washington, after all. The man once described by *The New Republic* as a "state-of-the-art sleazeball" usually has his chauffeur return the videos to the rental shop, freeing Stone to hit the town and seek to work off the day's accumulated tensions by applying his oleaginous charms to very young women. "I had an erotic dream about you recently," Stone, the defender of family values, told one such acquaintance not long ago. "And those dreams usually come true."

"OF MAKING MANY BOOKS there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh." Who can better attest to the truth of Ecclesiastes's famous words than media baron **S. I. NEWHOUSE JR.**? One recent evening, after he had spent another busy, up-at-4:00-a.m. workday dismembering prestigious but unprofitable divisions of Random House, Newhouse glumly trudged over to the Metropolitan Club, where he elicited suspicious stares from the staff by wandering around the lobby for several minutes in apparent confusion. The slightly rumpled, earth-tone-clad magnate finally approached an attendant, explaining that he had been invited to a party at the club...but couldn't recall what, or whom, it was for. Before the police could be summoned, Newhouse added helpfully, "It's a *publishing* party." The attendant mentioned a reception in honor of **ROBERT CARO**, whose *Means of Ascent*, part two of his endless biography of Lyndon Johnson, had just been published by Knopf, which Newhouse owns. "That's it!" cried Newhouse, at last remembering why he was where he was.

THE ALLURE OF THE CIRCUS lies in its exaggerated sense of reality, its ability to make the fantastic real. And few circus-animal acts embody this ideal of entertainment excellence better than **SIEGFRIED & ROY**, who, in addition to being the florid stylistic heirs of **LIBERACE**, stand as the world's premier beast tamers. The compulsively tanned and frosted German-born pair have spared no expense or safety consideration in the production of their permanent \$25 million extravaganza, which opened recently at Las Vegas's Mirage hotel and casino. Owing to their dangerous, supermacho proximity to wild animals and enthusiastic fans, Siegfried & Roy have made sure their spangly costumes are extra-safe and -spectacular. That is, their skintight outfits are endowed, according to the strict demands of the duo, with codpieces that are both super-protective and larger than life—and, stars being stars, conspicuously larger than the crotch padding ordered up for their squad of boy assistants.



## THE JUNK BOND TOTE BOARD

Beginning Our Regular Salute to the 1980s

**L**ast December we introduced a junk bond tote board to help readers keep track of the fate of the nearly 1,000 businesses that Mike Milken, Drexel Burnham and assorted copycats hobbled with debt. As the shakeout progresses, it's getting hard to keep up with all the restructurings, defaults and bankruptcies taking place. Here's the first of what we now expect to be bimonthly updates. —Eddie Stern

Junk Bond Issuers Not Belly-Up Just Yet	Junk Bond Issuers Who Have Restructured for Easier Payments	Junk Bond Issuers in Default	Junk Bond Issuers in Chapter 11
Gillett Holdings Inc. I.C.H. Corporation Morse Shoe Inc. Orion Pictures Pacific Lumber Ralphs Grocery Company R.H. Macy & Company Inc. RJR Nabisco Inc. Trump Castle Casino Resort By The Bay Trump Taj Mahal 20th Century Fox Film Corporation	Ingersoll Newspapers Inc. Leaseway Transportation S.C.I. Television Seaman Furniture Company Inc. Southland Corporation Western Union	Farley Industries General Homes Corporation Geothermal Resources International Inc. Pan Am Corporation Simplicity Pattern Company Inc.	Allegheny International Inc. American Continental Corporation Braniff Airlines Campeau Corporation Coleco Industries DeLaurentiis Entertainment Group Drexel Burnham Lambert Group Eastern Airlines Gibraltar Financial Corporation Integrated Resources Jim Walter Industries (Hillsborough Holdings) Maxicare Health Plans Inc. Resorts International Revco D.S. Inc. Southmark Corporation

## PRIVATE LIVES OF PUBLIC FIGURES



Donald Jr., Ivanka and little Eric call their dad to wish him a happy Father's Day.

ILLUSTRATION BY DREW FRIEDMAN

### WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Special  
International-Affairs  
Edition

#### PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH

SOS: BIG HUGE PRETENDER

#### MIKHAIL S. GORBACHEV

CHEKHOV, ALIAS MR. BIG

#### THE POLITBURO

O, HOT TUB PERIL

#### THE COLD WAR

CHEAT WORLD

—Andy Aaron

THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

motor scooter; and a Philippine ricksha (missing one light)

**Furniture:** a brown sofa with eight pillows; a brown love seat with two matching pillows; a coffee table with a chipped glass top; a console television with a turntable and an eight-track tape deck; a sectional wood wall unit; a white "fur-type" rug; Foxx's folding director's chair

**Animal artwork:** a porcelain stallion; a large wooden elephant; a mother elephant; a small elephant with a man on its back pushing a log; a wooden baby elephant; an ivory elephant; a ceramic horse head; a four-foot-high straw giraffe; a wooden water buffalo; a large tiger statue

**Foxx-based artwork:** a three-by-four-foot *Sanford and Son* painting; a painting of Foxx on a mirror; a poster of a cover of *Ebony*; a poster of a *TV Guide* cover; a *Sanford and Son* picture; a poster from the film *Norman... Is That You?*; a picture of Foxx holding a cigarette; four pictures of Foxx mounted in one frame; a copper picture of Foxx; a photo of Foxx; another framed picture of Foxx; another; three pictures of Foxx's face; a 25-by-32-inch painting of Foxx, depicting him as part man, part horse

**Electronics:** two Sony Trinitrons; a Toshiba television; a Sony VCR; an RCA television-AM-FM radio; a Sony Super Beta-max; a Zenith VCR; a Sanyo stereo; a Panasonic video camera; a Sanyo video camera; a Portavision AM-FM radio-cassette recorder

**Icons:** a hand-carved Buddha; a wall plaque from Martin Luther King; a commemorative trophy from LaWanda Page; a picture of Frank Sinatra; a brass cigar holder signed by

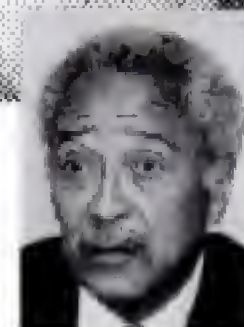


Hugh Hefner

*Jewelry:* a yellow metal ring initialed RF; a yellow metal ring initialed FS; a yellow metal ring with one blue and two white stones; a yellow metal ring in the shape of a fox head; a yellow metal ring in the shape of a fox; a yellow metal ring in the shape of Foxx; two silver rings; a ring in the shape of a horse; a yellow metal bracelet with red and white stones that spell REDD; a yellow metal chain inscribed SELBIA 74; a yellow metal cigarette lighter inscribed FOXX; a yellow metal Penguin lighter; a yellow metal Calibra lighter; a yellow metal lighter initialed RF; a silver lighter; a Hadson fantasy lighter with digital display; a Gucci watch; a yellow metal Arnex pocket watch; a yellow metal Concord watch engraved FRIARS CLUB IN HONOR OF REDD FOXX AUGUST 12, 1975; a yellow metal Omega constellation watch; a yellow metal Pulsar digital watch; a Guess? watch; a silver Mickey Mouse watch; a yellow metal Girard-Perregaux watch with the initial R in clear stones; a yellow metal Cross pen inscribed REDD FOXX LOVES YOU; a money clip with stones in the shape of a horse head; a money clip shaped like a car; a man's necklace with a pendant shaped like Sagittarius; a second Sagittarius pendant; a yellow metal pendant with stones in the shape of a 40; a yellow metal pendant in the shape of a phonograph record, inscribed HAPPY 54TH, MURRAY; a yellow metal charm in the shape of a foot; a yellow metal charm in the shape of a heart; a yellow metal charm in the shape of a woman; a yellow metal charm in the shape of genitals; a charm shaped like Christ; a charm shaped like Bob Hope, inscribed TO REDD; a yellow metal spoon; a tie tack shaped ▶

## BLOOPERS, BLUNDERS, NO PRACTICAL JOKES

*The Excuses of David Dinkins, Part I*



**W**hen faced with charges of being slow, careless and negligent, New York's flavor-free mayor, David N. Dinkins, is apt to reframe the accusations to mean meticulous, poorly staffed and, well, *just plain human*.

BLUNDER	EXCUSE
Between 1969 and 1972 Dinkins fails to pay his taxes	Elliptically assures the public, "I haven't committed a crime. What I did was fail to comply with the law." Explains that paying taxes "was one of the things I was always going to take care of, but sometimes I did not have all the funds available or I did not have all the documents and other material I needed"
On the very day he takes office as Manhattan borough president, Dinkins sells his 588 shares of Inner City Broadcasting Company stock to his son for \$58,000, significantly less than the \$1 million at which he officially appraised the stock two years earlier. Dinkins aide Dennis DeLeon continues to consider and vote on issues relating to Inner City Broadcasting though indirectly advised not to do so by the city's ethics board	Explains the tricky math by which he arrived at his later appraisal: "You know, you make a guess. If you assume that the stations are worth so much and if you make this and then you divide it." Admits it was "my responsibility to make certain Dennis knew about the [ethics] letter, and it fell in the cracks"
While borough president, Dinkins violates financial-disclosure rules by failing to report that Manhattan jeweler Clyde Duneier assisted in paying for a trip the two men and their wives took to the south of France in 1988	Offers that he is "willing to accept" that he made a mistake. Explains how city's ethics code conflicts with his own leisure principles: "I think he might have bought a drink here or there, you know. I think you can understand that when people are off on vacation together, at least the people with whom I travel, we don't say it's your turn now, it's my turn later"
On trips to Miami and Washington, D.C., in January, Dinkins flies first-class, books an afternoon hotel room (presumably for one of his compulsive showers) and charges his and Congressman Charles Rangel's expenses to taxpayers. City regulations require that employees fly coach and book rooms only if staying overnight	Explains he simply used the "credit card which I had available" for Rangel's fare and, concerning his intention to continue flying first-class, that he's "confident that the people of our city will be pleased that their mayor is able to work in greater comfort"
Dinkins shilly-shallies in appointing officials to major city posts. Almost three months after he takes office, top positions at the welfare department and city-planning commission, among other agencies, remain unfilled	Shifts blame to appointments committee, which he has not yet named, saying if it had been in place, it "already could have been considering names"; then concedes, "We have such a lot of work yet to do"
In the aftermath of the fire at the Happy Land social club, the <i>Daily News</i> reports that Dinkins's Hispanic-affairs adviser, William Nieves, is listed as the owner of a club that has been cited for fire-safety violations. The club, which should have been closed, is still open	Says Nieves is not the owner but a member of the board. Also says establishment is a cultural center, not a social club; that while it serves drinks from a long counter, it does not have a bar; and that while it charges patrons for food and drink, it is not a commercial establishment

—Carter Burden III





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Tanqueray Sterling

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THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

like handcuffs

Miscellaneous: a Prince George London Hotel bed warmer; a Golden Nugget slot machine; a lot containing "firearms, misc. knives, billy clubs, numchuks"; a wooden box of knives, swords and cutting implements; two bulletproof vests; 43 45-rpm records by Redd Foxx; 71 copies of the album *Foxx Live in 85*; an electronic cash register; a mermaid lamp; three sets of coins from the Philippines; a Genie organ with automatic rhythm; an Indian-chief headdress; a 1984 Los Angeles Olympics commemorative medal; four used hubcaps; a ukulele.

**"THAT'S ALL FOR NOW, SPARKY. WOULD YOU PLEASE PUT ONE OF THE GOLDFISH ON THE LINE?"**

Things have certainly changed since the phone company was broken up: prices have increased, service has declined, and estimation of the customer's intelligence has grown more contemptuous. Witness this excerpt from *Telebriefs*, a self-described "monthly mini-newspaper for users of telecommunications services" that was included in the bills of all customers of Illinois Bell:

"WHEN YOUR PET'S ALONE, PICK UP THE PHONE AND CALL

"If you're like a lot of other pet owners, you probably wonder how your pet is getting along when you're at work. There's no way to tell for sure, of course, but there is a way you can communicate. All you need is an answering machine. . . Just dial your home number and let it ring until your answering machine picks up the call. Listen for the beep, then start talking. You can address your pet by name, just as you would if you were at home. It really doesn't matter what you say after that, because it's the sound of your voice your pet appreciates

**Part I: How Life-style Journalism Works**

*In the course of a 73.5-year lifetime, the average American will spend*

- ☉ 7 years in the bathroom
- ☉ 5 years waiting in line
- ☉ 2 years trying to make phone calls to people who aren't home
- ☉ 1 year searching for misplaced objects
- ☉ 8 months opening junk mail

These factoids, from a press release sent out by the Pittsburgh consulting firm of Fortino & Associates, have appeared in *The New York Times* (including on the Op-Ed page), *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today* (twice), *Business Week*, *Psychology Today*, *Premiere*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Self*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Harper's Index* and George Will's syndicated column, and on NBC, CBS and ABC News, *The Tonight Show*, the *Today* show and *Good Morning America*. The item has been reprinted wherever column space is filled with neat little stories about the wacky world we live in—which is to say, just about everywhere.

Larry Speakes once said, "If you tell the same story five times, it's true." So this story must be *really* true—after all, it passed unscathed through the fact-checking procedures of so many reputable news organizations. Surely so many writers and editors couldn't have reported information that was the result of someone's having hit the wrong button on his calculator!

After a grueling four minutes with our own calculator, we broke the alleged "lifetime" statistics down into their daily quotas. According to Fortino's data, we learned, the average American spends, *every day*,

- ☉ 2 hours 20 minutes in the bathroom
- ☉ 1 hour 40 minutes waiting in line
- ☉ 40 minutes trying to phone people who aren't home
- ☉ 20 minutes searching for misplaced objects
- ☉ 15 minutes opening junk mail

This was news. Has anyone outside of Eastern Europe actually waited in line 1 hour and 40 minutes a day, *seven days a week*, from infancy until death? After all, the Stones don't go on tour that often. And does everyone really spend 40 minutes a day trying to telephone people who aren't home, when such calls are necessarily awfully short?

Don't forget, these are supposed to be *average* figures. So if you think you're spending only 30 minutes a day in the bathroom, then someone else must be spending 3 or 4 hours in there.

—Andy Aaron

**Part II: Talking to the Factoid Factory**

Wondering if we were the only people in the United States who feel that 15 minutes a day is an exceptional amount of time to spend reading Publishers Clearinghouse Sweepstakes literature and invitations to visit time-share condominiums, we called Fortino & Associates president Michael Fortino and asked if something was perhaps wrong with his figures.

"Wait a minute," he said, apparently without irony. "Do you have industrial analysts going out and taking data that contradicts ours?"

We reassured him that we were acting on our own, that it just seemed like most people we knew spent about 30 seconds daily slipping unopened junk mail into the garbage. "*You* may not open junk mail, but other people do," he replied. His statistics, he went on to explain, are based on phone polls, on the use of Nielsen-type families who agree to record their actions in a diary, and on "time-and-motion studies" wherein analysts put a stopwatch on regular, oblivious citizens in public places.

We asked how he'd arrived at the assertion that Americans spend 20 minutes daily searching for misplaced objects. "Just think of how much time you spend looking for a can opener, for example," he said cheerfully. But, we asked, don't most people keep their can opener in a kitchen drawer, as we do? "But that time you spend fiddling around in the drawer *looking* for it is wasted time. . . It's misplaced *within* the drawer. Those are the sort of minute measurements we had to do in our time-and-motion studies."

And what sort of measurements were behind the 2 hours and 20 minutes in the bathroom? "A lot of people just think of *defecation*," he said. "You've got to brush your teeth, floss, do your hair and wash up. *You* probably shower," he added, "but many other people take baths."

We wondered if there was good money to be made in this kind of consulting. "Our speeches book out at about \$5,000 for a one-hour talk," he said. "But I'm not in this for the money or the publicity. . . I'm trying to make people aware of a concept called Life-style Management. I want to make it a concept for the nineties. . . I hope to enable Americans to spend their time more constructively, leading more meaningful lives. . . I'm writing a book about it. It's going to be full of these time-and-motion figures. And listen, I'd like to submit them to you before anybody else, because SPY has been very good to me."

—Eddie Stern





# Marlboro

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking  
Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.

17 mg "tar," 1.1 mg nicotine  
av. per cigarette by FTC method.

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## TAKE RODNEY DANGERFIELD, PLEASE

*Sweaty Borscht Belt Comic or Annoying Figure of Speech?*

**W**hy is it that over the last year so few of the references to Rodney Dangerfield in the press were actually *about* Rodney Dangerfield? Perhaps it's because Dangerfield the man is far less useful than Dangerfield the symbol to deadline-pressed writers desperate for a catchy lead sentence. Herewith, a severely condensed anthology of the year in Dangerfield metaphors.

"Aphrodisiac research, while gaining repute, still remains **the Rodney Dangerfield of the academic world**." —*The Wall Street Journal*, February 14, 1989

"Six years after its birth, the Small Computer Systems Interface (SCSI)—**the Rodney Dangerfield of peripheral attachment schemes**—may soon get some respect as the primary method of attaching external storage devices to PCs." —*PC Week*, April 4, 1989

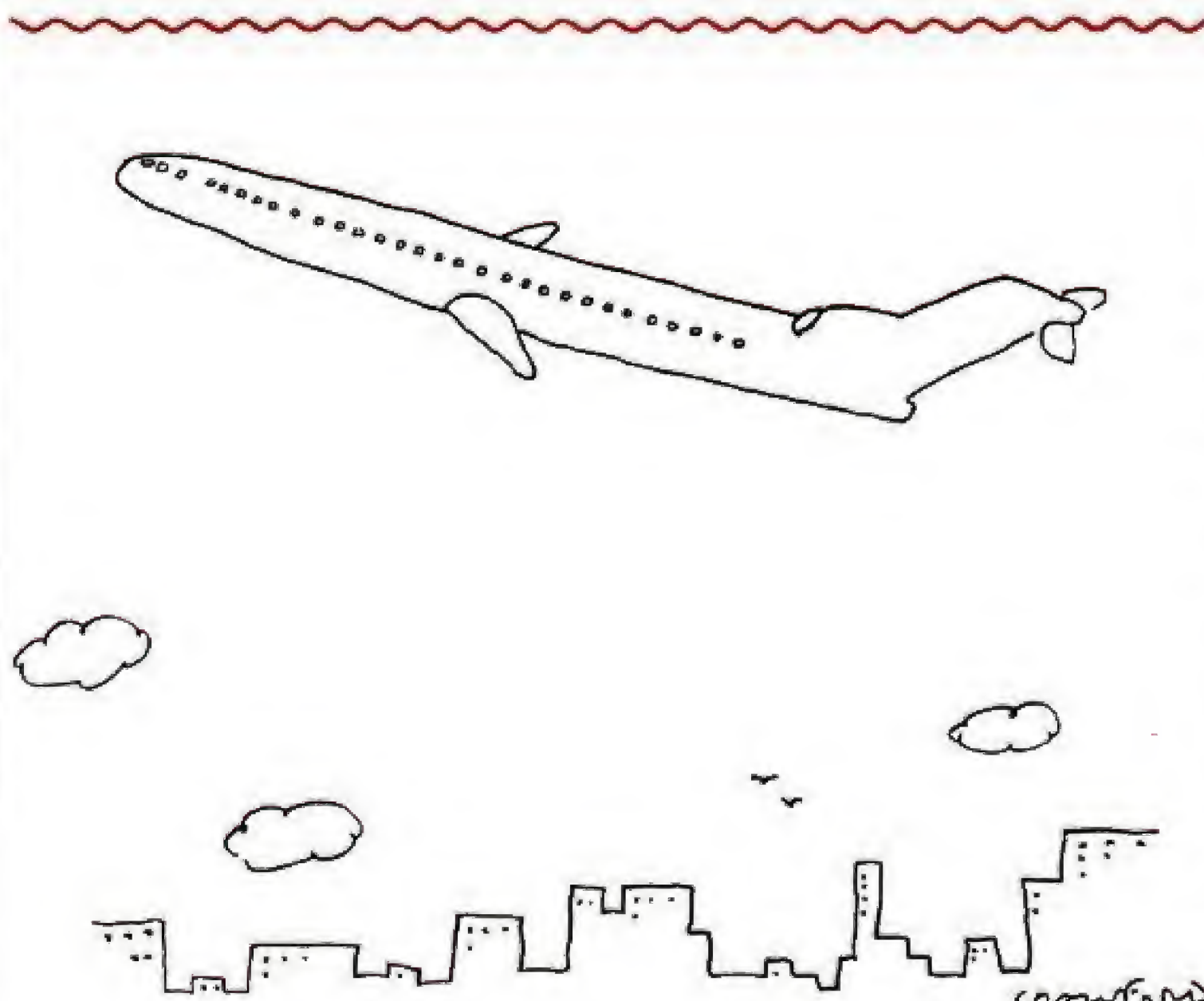
"Talk to any top executive of Westinghouse Electric Corp., and before long you'll hear the same complaint: 'We can't get no respect; we're **the Rodney Dangerfield of industrial America**.' " —*Fortune*, July 3, 1989

"Manufactured housing don't get no respect. Comedian **Rodney Dangerfield** usually gets a laugh when he says the same about himself. But the public's lack of respect for the manufactured housing industry is no joke to its developers and owners." —*Crain's Detroit Business*, September 4, 1989

"Motor oil is **the Rodney Dangerfield of the automotive aftermarket**." —*Automotive Marketing*, October 1, 1989

"Historically, the auto auction business has been **the Rodney Dangerfield of the automotive industry**." —*Advantage*, December 1, 1989

—Don Steinberg



"Folks, this is Captain Hundley again. We'll be making what I hope will be only a brief return to the gate to get us some bigger wings."

## THE LIZ SMITH TOTE BOARD

*A Monthly Tally*



*mentioned once every...*

Liz herself	1.1
Donald Trump	1.3
Ivana Trump	1.5
Marla Maples	3.4
Kathleen Sullivan	4.8
Barbara Walters	4.8
Bryant Gumbel	6
Henry Kissinger	6
The Plaza	6
The Waldorf-Astoria	6
Roseanne Barr	8
Anne Bass	8
La Grenouille	8
Bette Davis	12
Carol Channing	24
SPY	24

*...days*

## THE NEW YORK TIMES CHRONICLE TOTE BOARD

*A Monthly Tally*



*mentioned once every...*

Mikhail Gorbachev	8
Vaclav Havel	12
Muzaffar Ali	24
Yuriy V. Dubinin	24
Guillermo Endara	24
Nikolai Gubenko	24
Hitoshi Motoshima	24
Mstislav Rostropovich	24
Roald Z. Sagdeyev	24
Rodion Shtchedrin	24
Bruce Springsteen	24
Galina Vishnevskaya	24
Grace Kennan Warnecke	24

*...days*

THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

*the most... Remember to turn up the volume a little on your answering machine, so your pet can hear you."*

### DEAD MEN DO TELL TALES, AND THEY'RE PRETTY MACABRE

Last year, when we reviewed the contents of *The American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology* (The Fine Print, May 1989), we found a noteworthy concentration of accounts by coroners of autoerotic deaths. Not so this year—the editorial interest of the *Journal* in this subject seems to have gone on sabbatical, replaced with a fan's notes on some grisly moments from British history (the *Journal* argues that blaming Richard III for the deaths of the little princes seems unjustified on the evidence, and that Kosminski, a Polish immigrant butcher, was probably Jack the Ripper). Of course, there are the usual reports of unusual deaths.

The coroner of Stark County, Ohio, writes of a case of "Sudden Death by *Lepomis macrochirus* (the Killer Fish)." A healthy 40-year-old man who was fishing on Tharmon Lake caught a four-inch bluegill. In what was apparently premature celebration, he held the fish aloft and perhaps let out a shout of triumph. At that moment the fish wriggled off the hook and fell headfirst into the man's mouth. Unable to remove the slippery fish, the man, living out a scene from *America's Most Tragic Home Videos*, struggled home. Paramedics were summoned, but when they arrived, they found that the fish's scales and gills had lodged in the man's windpipe. The man asphyxiated, and although the coroner doesn't mention it, our guess is that the fish did, too.

Are any suicides proliferating? Two doctors



In 1777, the Duchess of Edinburgh threw a ball  
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## SEPARATED AT BIRTH?

CELESTIAL  
HINDSIGHT

Special Wendy Hawks Edition



THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

from Maryland discuss their study of the nine cases of multiple-gunshot suicides that came through the office of that state's chief medical examiner over a six-year period. Most memorable was the case of a particularly unfortunate man who shot himself once in the chest and four times in the head; three of the bullets were found flattened against the outer surface of his skull. Physicians from Wellington, New Zealand, tell the tale of a 37-year-old schizophrenic who was a patient in a psychiatric facility. His doctors prescribed an occupational-therapy workshop where he was allowed to engage in carpentry. Left unattended, he killed himself by attempting to cut his head off with a hand saw. An Austro-Swiss team of doctors tell of the failed suicide attempt of a 59-year-old butcher who tried to kill himself by shooting his pacemaker with an animal-slaughtering gun. The man missed, nevertheless causing the pacemaker to malfunction. However, the doctors note that a direct hit would not necessarily have proved fatal. "This was an act of extreme autoaggression aimed at an implanted medical device... by a depressed and insufficiently informed patient," the doctors write.

A pathologist in Tasmania submits an article he calls "Murdered to the Music of Bob Dylan," the account of a 21-year-old man whose mother complained when he returned home at 4:00 a.m. and played Dylan's *Desire* album too loud. Unhappy at the rebuke, the son—who had been smoking marijuana—kicked his mother to death and danced naked on her body. Then, perhaps prompted by the track "One More Cup of Coffee (Valley Below)," the man went inside, fetched a tin of coffee and



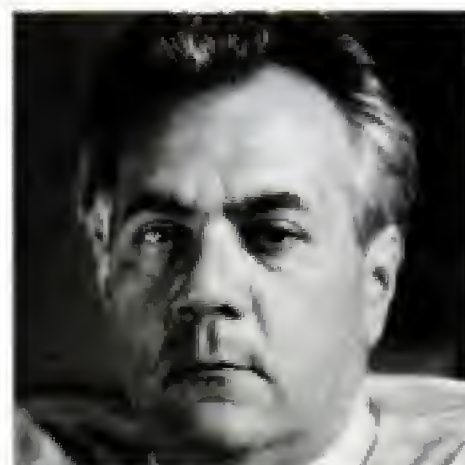
Michael Palin...



and Jan Morris?



John Gotti...



and Barney Frank?



General Colin Powell...



and George Kennedy?

**Subject:** BO JACKSON

**Sign:** Sagittarius (b. 11/30/62)

**Date:** February 4, 1990

**Notable Activity:** Was forced in arbitration to accept a \$1 million salary from the Kansas City Royals rather than the \$1.9 million he'd sought

**Horoscope:** "There could be a few minor disagreements over money."—Wendy Hawks, *National Examiner*

**Subject:** ANDY ROONEY

**Sign:** Capricorn (b. 1/14/19)

**Date:** February 8, 1990

**Notable Activity:** Was suspended from *60 Minutes* by CBS News after an impolitic remark about blacks that was attributed to him appeared in *The Advocate*

**Horoscope:** "Associates are taken aback at your outspokenness."—Wendy Hawks, *National Examiner*

**Subject:** DANIEL ORTEGA

**Sign:** Scorpio (b. 11/11/45)

**Date:** February 25, 1990

**Notable Activity:** Lost Nicaraguan presidential election

**Horoscope:** "You're ready for a change of pace. Get away for a few days."—Wendy Hawks, *National Examiner*

—George Mannes

## LOGROLLING IN OUR TIME

"No one can match Medawar for verbal wit and dexterity."

—Stephen Jay Gould on Peter Medawar's *Memoir of a Thinking Radish*

"Gould is a natural writer; he has something to say and the inclination and skill with which to say it."

—Medawar on Gould's *The Panda's Thumb*

"Really exciting writing. This is a wonderful talent and enormous fun to read."

—Kate Millett on Andrea Dworkin's *Ice and Fire*

"A wonderful book."

—Dworkin on Millett's *Going to Iran*

"Astonishingly poised.... Powerfully mythic."

—Cynthia Ozick on Susan Fromberg Schaeffer's *The Madness of a Seduced Woman*

"She is a national treasure."

—Schaeffer on Ozick's *Levitation*

—Howard Kaplan



Say goodbye  
to razor burn irritation.



PROGRAMME  
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emptied it on his mother's body. He was found to be insane.

The *Journal* also includes a long report, co-written by the Dade County coroner, on the tattoos of the Marielitos, the Cuban refugees who arrived in America in the chaotic 1980 flotilla. While the vast majority of the 125,000 Marielitos were legitimately seeking political asylum, a lot of them, perhaps 20 percent, were criminals. A great many of the men had tattoos; a great many of them ended up in the county morgue. The tattoos tell a lot about prison in Cuba. Some indicate an affiliation with one or another religious cult. Some, particularly those that appear between the thumb and forefinger, indicate one's criminal specialty (a heart with the word MADRE signifies an executioner; a falling star, a kidnapper; a trident, an enforcer; and five dots, a pickpocket). There was also the usual array of symbols — the leopard, the eagle, the voluptuous woman with a knife in her hand and a shark between her legs.

Many of the Marielitos described in the article had messages tattooed on them. These messages seem surprisingly elaborate, though the authors explain that while the tattoos were applied with needles, pins, mattress coils, matchbook staples or light-bulb filaments, getting them didn't hurt, except when the tattoos were applied to the eyelid, lower lip or penis. Like the messages on T-shirts, these tattoos centered on several themes — love, death, sex, women, life and Mom — though the sort of message one finds on a black cotton-poly blend generally reflects a greater sense of fun than that found etched into the flesh of a dead Marielito:

I PREFER THE CRUELTY OF DISILLUSIONMENT TO ▶

## "NO, NOT 'GOTTA GO NOW' — IT'S 'GOTTI GO NOW' "

SPY Resolves an Audio Mystery



**A**t John Gotti's assault-and-conspiracy trial in New York this past winter — he was, of course, acquitted — state prosecutors introduced a new transcript of a conversation between two members of Manhattan's Irish-American Westies gang. The May 16, 1986, conversation was also recorded by federal authorities, and the federal transcript was used to prosecute gangsters in 1987 and 1988 cases. In getting Gotti acquitted, defense attorney Bruce Cutler pointed out the significant differences between the state and federal transcripts of the same conversation, implying that not even trained authorities could decipher what these mumbling, slack-tongued thugs were saying. Now, hoping to clear up this mystery, SPY offers its own, third version. (U indicates the absolutely unintelligible parts. The transcripts have been abridged.)

THE FEDERAL TRANSCRIPT	THE STATE TRANSCRIPT	THE SPY TRANSCRIPT
<b>Kevin Kelly:</b> [U] I went to see them all at the [expletive] "lanthers" last week... [U] not to talk to us or nothin', you know?	<b>Kevin Kelly:</b> [U] I recommended Joe the Lather [U]. I went up to set it up. The Lather, me and Kenny. [U] Joe Schlereth. You know Joe.	<b>Kevin Kelly:</b> I say Louie, Louie, oh, no, [U] we got to go.
<b>Mickey Featherstone:</b> Yeah.	<b>Mickey Featherstone:</b> Yeah.	<b>Mickey Featherstone:</b> Yeah, yeah, yeah, ya, ya.
<b>Kelly:</b> And, uh, me and Kenny set it up. Then we went up there and I stood outside. [U] the lobby. The guy was there. And that was, you know... that's it.	<b>Kelly:</b> And, uh, me and Kenny set it up. Then we met up with him. I stood outside. He went [U]. That guy was there. And he popped him. You know? That's it.	<b>Kelly:</b> A fine little girl waiting for me, [U] by the sea. Man. [U] all alone, never [U] at home.
<b>Featherstone:</b> [U]	<b>Featherstone:</b> [U]	<b>Featherstone:</b> [U] and then we did it again.
<b>Kelly:</b> I says, "Don't be doin' that, 'cause I ain't doin' it no more. Don't be doin' it no more."	<b>Kelly:</b> I say, "Don't be doin' that, 'cause I ain't doin' it no more. Don't be doin' it."	<b>Kelly:</b> I say Louie, Louie, oh, baby, said we gotta go now... Let's go!

—Joe Mastrianni



*Walter Monheit's*  
**BLURB-O-MAT**

Capsule Movie Reviews by Walter "Dateline: The Copa" Monheit™, the Movie Publicist's Friend

**DICK TRACY**, starring Warren Beatty, Madonna (Walt Disney) ○○○○

*Walter Monheit says, "Beatty's Dick is no ordinary flatfoot — he's a foot and a half! As for Madonna — make that Madooooofna! Here's betting she'll pop your monocle too! Oscar calling Joe Jitsu: round up Dick Tracy on the double!"*

**TOTAL RECALL**, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger (Tri-Star) ○○○

*Walter Monheit says, "The triceptitude of *The Terminator* + the pectorality of *Predator* + the he-manliness of *Conan the Barbarian* = Total Arnold! To sum up, it's the Schwarzeneggiest!"*

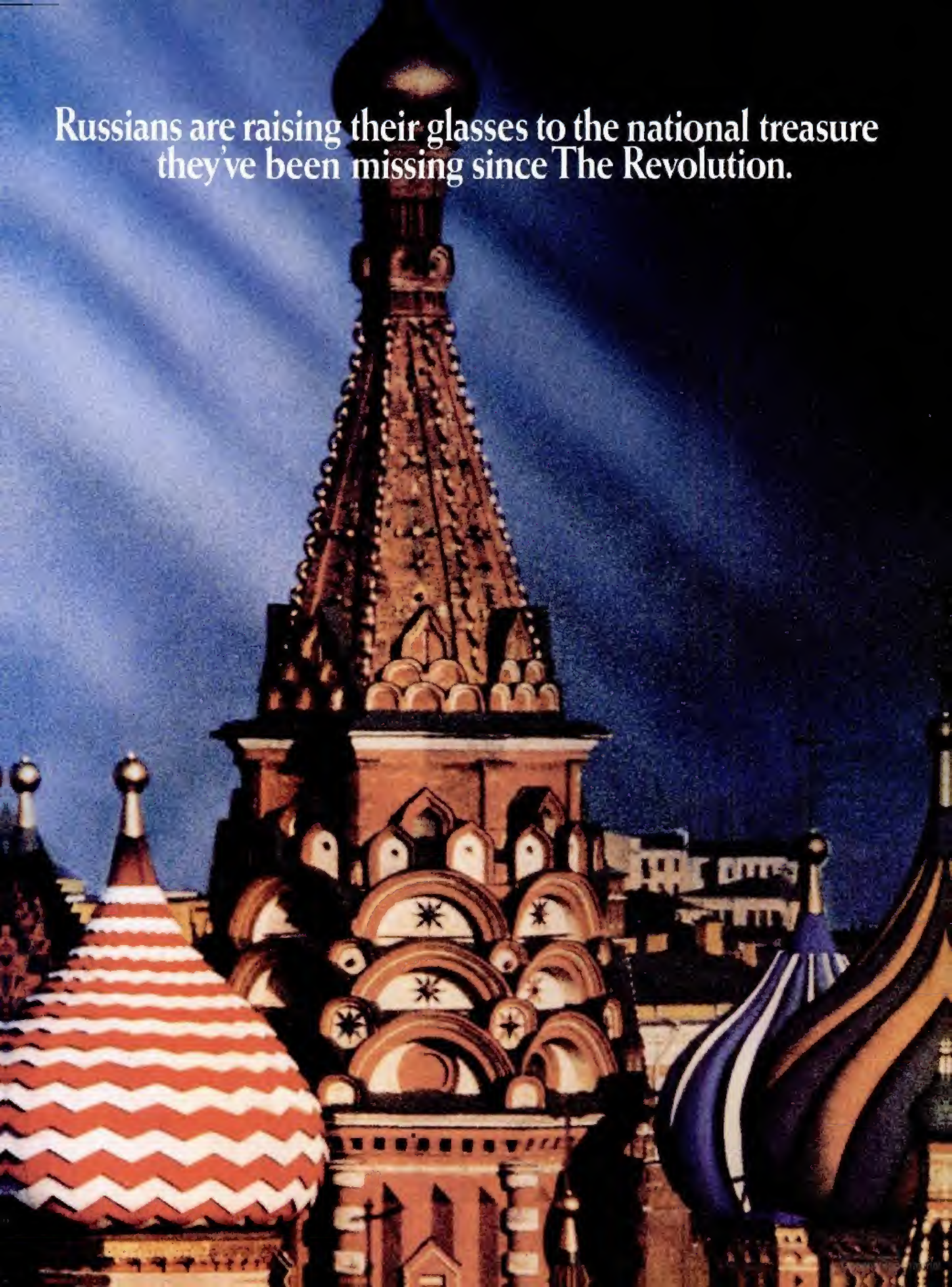
**CADILLAC MAN**, starring Robin Williams (Orion) ○○○○

*Walter Monheit says, "Eight-cylinder, sedan-tastic, luxury-car har-dee-har-hars that rocked my chassis like a speed bump! Fill 'er up! With Oscars!"* ♪

*What the monocles mean: ○○○○ — excellent; ○○○○○ — indisputably a classic*



Russians are raising their glasses to the national treasure  
they've been missing since The Revolution.





THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

THE LIE OF A FEIGNED LOVE  
YOU LIED WHEN YOU  
TOLD ME YOU LOVED ME  
TODAY I AM A VICTIM;  
TOMORROW I'LL BE AN  
EXECUTIONER

I AM THE SON OF  
PAIN, AND MY NAME IS  
SUFFERING

MOTHER, TO DIE IS NOT  
PAINFUL... TO LIVE  
WITHOUT YOU IS

I CAME TO THE WORLD  
ON A VISIT, AND WHEN I  
BECOME A HINDRANCE, I  
WILL LEAVE

MY FRIENDS ARE THE  
DEAD

AS A MAN, I APPLAUD MY-  
SELF; AS A SON, I CURSE MY-  
SELF FOR HAVING MADE MY  
MOTHER SUFFER SO MUCH

MOTHER, SINCE YOU  
MADE ME LEAVE HOME  
WHEN I WAS ELEVEN YEARS  
OLD, MY DESTINY HAS BEEN  
TO SUFFER BEHIND BARS

ONLY MY LONELINESS  
CAN TELL YOU SOMETHING  
ABOUT ME

FROM MY MOTHER, I DO  
NOT EXPECT BETRAYAL

NOT ALL WOMEN ARE  
BAD; SOME ARE WORSE

I SAW YOU, WHORE, AND I  
AM CRYING

IF YOU WANT TO ENJOY,  
COME ON UP [applied on  
the genitals or in the pubic  
area]

I COME FROM A COUNTRY  
WITHOUT LAW, AND I BRING  
A BULLET WITHOUT A NAME

WHY FALL IN LOVE WITH  
LIFE IF IN THE END I SHALL  
HAVE TO MARRY DEATH?

THE WIND PLAYS WITH  
THE DUST AND DESTINY  
WITH MEN

Not all the messages are so dark. The article is accom-  
panied by a photograph of  
a corpse with its lower lip  
turned down to reveal, tat-  
tooned inside it, the word  
BESAME. One wants to  
think of this fun-loving  
chap in happier days, at-  
tending a party, flapping his  
lower lip at young ladies,  
flashing the ice-breaking  
message "Kiss me." ☛

## JUNE DATEBOOK *Enchanting and Alarming Events Upcoming*

**1** June Dairy Month,  
as sanctioned by the  
American Dairy  
Association, starts in  
Harvard,  
Illinois, with  
Milk Day.

Revelers  
participate in  
two- and seven-mile  
"Milk Runs."

**2** "Cows on the  
Concourse" day in  
Madison, Wisconsin,  
as Dairy Month  
festivities intensify;  
cows occupy the  
capitol square. There's  
also a 500-foot-long  
cheese sandwich.

**3** In Wausau,  
Wisconsin, contestants  
embark on 10K and  
3.2K "June Dairy Fun  
Runs."

**5** Free frozen yogurt  
is served on the  
statehouse lawn in  
Columbus, Ohio, from  
noon to 1:00 p.m. No  
official connection to

June Dairy Month;  
suggestions for staging  
a footrace are met  
with hurled scoops of  
raspberry.

**8** "Spotlight on Owls,"  
a tour through Pelham  
Bay Park led by the

Urban  
Park  
Rangers.

The uptown  
IRT No. 6

train swells with giddy  
owl enthusiasts, most  
of whom board at 59th  
Street, three blocks from  
the National Audubon  
Society's headquarters.  
Tweedy conviviality  
turns to fear when  
the train stalls in the  
South Bronx. Suddenly  
a black-tailed godwit  
is spotted, perched  
improbably on a  
lamppost on the  
elevated platform.  
Binoculars and  
notebooks are produced  
from I'M A BIRD  
WATCHER tote bags,  
and urban dread once  
again becomes bucolic  
glee.



**8** Nancy Sinatra turns  
50, endures countless  
"orthopedic boots" jokes.

**10** Manhattan bustles  
with ethnic pride: the  
Puerto Rican Day  
Parade, the Lower East  
Side Jewish Festival  
and the Feast of Saint  
Anthony. Coverage in  
the *Times* ("A Taste of  
New York's Melting  
Pot") makes gratuitous  
overuse of the word  
*nosh*.

**12** In the Bronx two  
longtime warring  
factions, sex offenders  
and drug abusers in  
their ranks, resume a  
bitter rivalry. WPIX's  
coverage of the  
Yankees-Red Sox  
game begins at 7:30.

**16** Last day till fall  
to catch *The New  
York Earth Room*, 141  
Wooster Street, where  
artist Walter De Maria  
installed soil covering  
3,600 square feet of  
floor space at a depth  
of 22 inches. He  
previously set up earth  
rooms in Munich and

Darmstadt, West  
Germany, but only  
this installation has  
lasted ten years. Sure,  
Germany'll replace  
us in the first tier of  
world powers, but *we  
have De Maria's dirt!*

**21** Seventeenth  
anniversary of Bread's  
final concert, in Salt  
Lake City, Utah. Dust  
off that old eight-track  
and give "Baby, I'm-A  
Want You" a listen  
with your old lady.

**23** The Mermaid  
Parade; Boardwalk  
and West 12th Street,  
Coney Island, 2:00 p.m.  
"All these people dress  
up as mermaids and  
run around," explains  
Abigail Meisel of the  
Parks Department. The  
comparatively sober  
Gay Pride Parade is  
held the next morning  
on Fifth Avenue in  
Manhattan.

**26** National Columnist's  
Day. According to  
organizer Jim Six of  
New Jersey's *Gloucester  
County Times*,  
"Newspaper columnists,  
who bring you joy all  
year long, deserve to  
be celebrated by their  
readers at least once a  
year." Well, here goes:

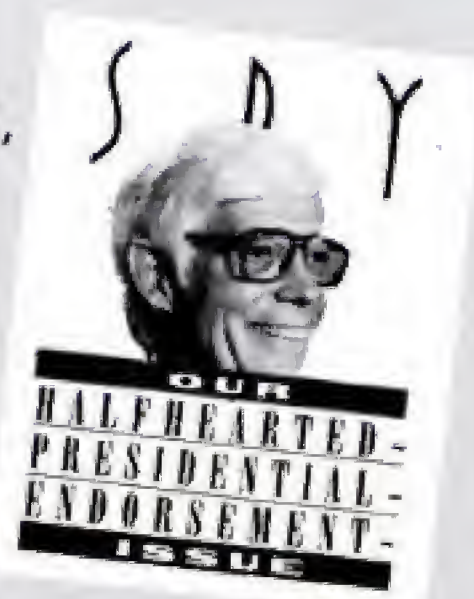
*Reunified Germany  
scares us too,  
But what scares us  
more is breakfast without  
you.*

*We think of all that  
you've opined  
And wonder how we  
lived pre-"On My Mind."  
Abe,  
We got you, Abe,  
We got you, Abe. ☛*

## TEN YEARS AGO IN SPY

"So then Sam Rayburn turns to me and whispers,  
"I have one word of advice for you, sonny — pork."  
As the Speaker laughs hoarsely it occurs to me  
that O'Neill, with his Celtic charm and ability to  
hold an audience's attention, would make a  
great salesman. If he ever chose to quit  
peddling his party's tired programs, he could  
sell computers, credit cards, airline seats, hotel  
rooms — anything."

—from "Getting Tip-sy," by David Owen, SPY,  
June 1980





# BACK IN THE U.S.S.R.

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© 1990 Ste. Pierre Smirnoff FL5 (Division of Heublein, Inc.) Hartford, CT—Made in U.S.A.

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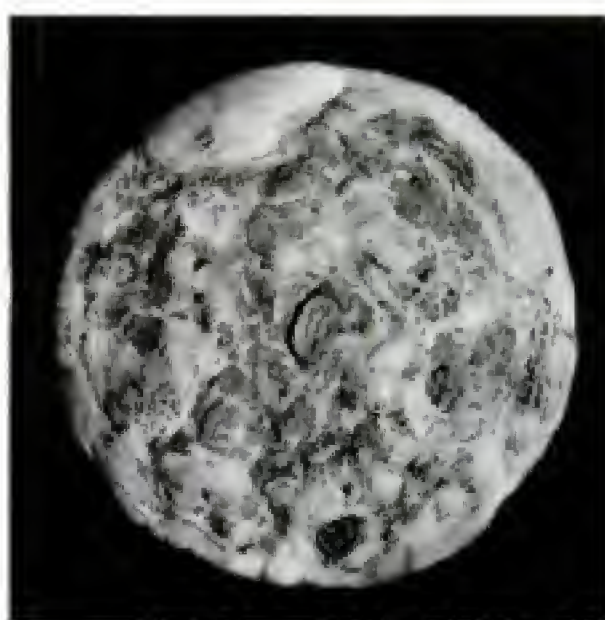
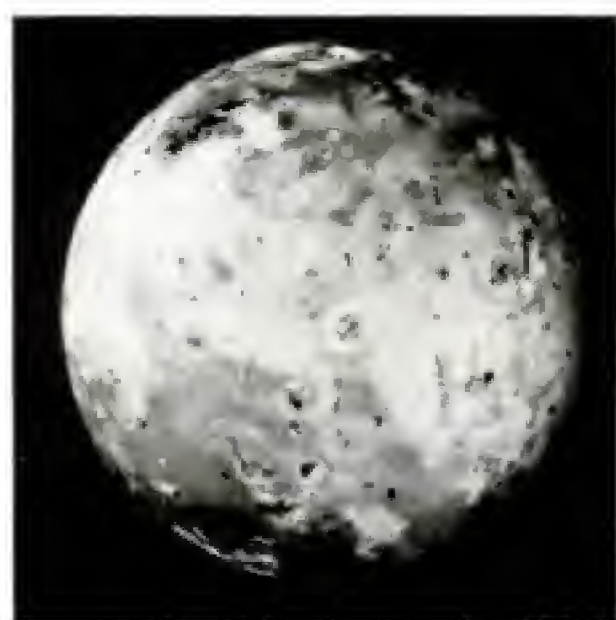
# IT DOESN'T TAKE A ROCKET SCIENTIST

A SPY Extraterrestrial Inquiry

Like most Americans, we get a tingle up our spine every time NASA accomplishes another feat of derring-do. But it seems to us that the photos that NASA has got back from its Voyager interplanetary probe look suspiciously...familiar. In fact, all the images are precisely what we would expect from people who spent their adolescence looking for household objects to represent planets in science-fair projects. We ran some tests and challenge you to discern the difference between NASA's snapshots of celestial objects and the pictures of stuff we had sitting around the SPY Laboratory — pictures that, we hasten to add, we will provide to NASA for many millions of dollars less than it spent on the Voyager mission. For example, could you tell ...



Saturn from half of a grapefruit on a plate?



Jupiter's moon Io from a cheese-and-mushroom pizza?

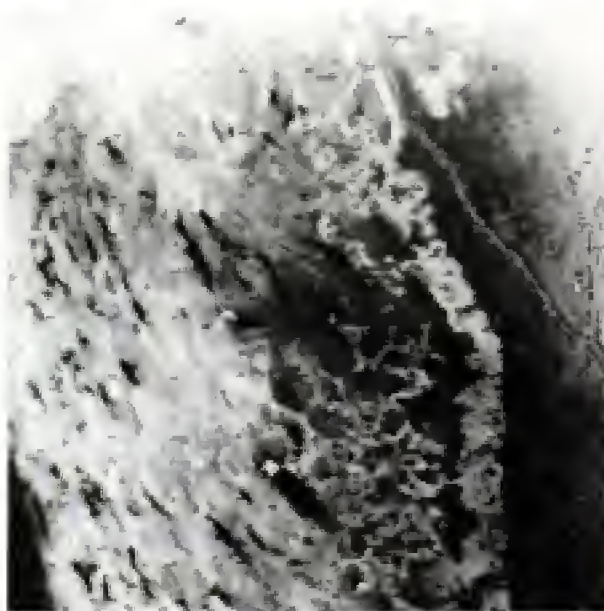


Neptune from a tennis ball?

## SCANDAL AT THE PLANT NURSERY



O'Donnell



Neptune's moon Triton from common forest lichen?



Saturn's moon Dione from a focaccia crust?

By the way, in all cases except Dione's, the putative celestial object is on the left.

—Larry Hettleman and Michael Hainey



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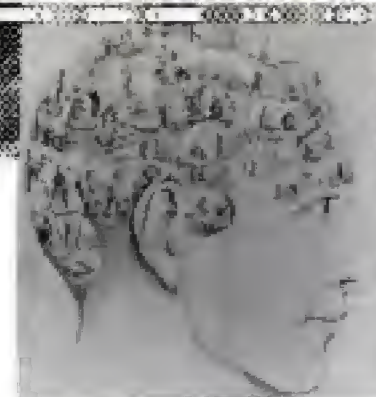
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## A KOPECK FOR HIS THOUGHTS

*As Communism Crumbles, American Journalists Look Inside Gorby's Head and Feel the Hurt*

**M**ikhail S. Gorbachev has never seemed lonelier than he did last week," *New York Times* correspondent Bill Keller reported early this year. In his piece on the Soviet leader's first 1990 trip to Lithuania, Keller really put you there—not just on the scene but up *real close*. Gorbachev, he said, was a man "pleading for the wayward republic to trust him, help him, save him, by preserving the union."

Call it *perestroika* of the press or a kinder, gentler media, but an awful lot of reporters seem to have developed an uncanny ability to read Gorby's mind. And more than that, they really *care* about the guy.

### PART I. KNOWING

*Pundits Who Know Beyond a Shadow of a Doubt:*

"The bitter and frustrating experience of the Russians for the last decade in Afghanistan was **doubtless in Gorbachev's mind** at the Communist Party Congress."—George McGovern, *Foreign Affairs*, 1987–88

"Soviet problems with ethnic unrest will **doubtless be very much on Gorbachev's mind** this week."—*Time*, March 21, 1988

"Uppermost in **Mr. Gorbachev's mind** was **clearly** Nikita Khrushchev's coup of June 1957."—*The Sunday Telegraph*, October 2, 1988

"Expanding trade and expanding investment... is **certainly very much on Mr. Gorbachev's mind**."—John Whitehead, deputy secretary of State, December 6, 1988

"The cost of defense has **long been on Mr. Gorbachev's mind**."—*The Christian Science Monitor*, February 3, 1989

"[The Ukraine's] economic importance **clearly preys on Mikhail Gorbachev's mind**."—Jeff Trimble, *U.S. News & World Report*, April 3, 1989

"The hulking Soviet economy, groping toward modernity, is **never far from Gorbachev's mind**."—*The Christian Science Monitor*, June 20, 1989

*Pundits Who Think They Know:*

"In Gorbachev's mind [the American military-industrial complex] **seems** to be both all-powerful and [motivated] by an implacable hostility to the Soviets."—*Time*, January 4, 1988

"The thought that he would be treated as less than equal has **probably** never crossed Gorbachev's mind."—Henry Kissinger, as quoted in *The Washington Post*, June 4, 1988

"The paradoxical gist of it all, **if I am reading Mr. Gorbachev's mind correctly**, is that the party should continue to run things but with more checks and balances: not so many, of course, that it might lose power."—*The Daily Telegraph*, November 28, 1988

"To get rid of American influence. **Is it wholly unworthy to suggest** that some such thought may be going through Mr. Gorbachev's mind?"—*The Sunday Telegraph*, November 5, 1989

*Ladies and Gentlemen, Michael Dobbs, Journalist, Psychic, Neurobiologist:*

"In Gorbachev's mind, everything is interconnected."—Michael Dobbs, *The Washington Post*, July 7, 1989

"In Gorbachev's mind, foreign policy and domestic policy are closely connected."—Michael Dobbs, *The Washington Post*, December 1, 1989

*Meanwhile, as Usual, the Soviets Lag Far Behind:*

"Even Central Committee aides in Moscow admit that no one can read Gorbachev's mind."—Dimitri Simes, *Newsday*, October 7, 1988

*With a Few Exceptions:*

"I couldn't read Mr. Gorbachev's mind as to what his motives might be."—Ronald Reagan (Reuters), January 11, 1989

### PART II. CARING

*When He's Tired:*

"Gorbachev **looked tired and somewhat drawn** as he stepped out of his special Soviet Zil limousine in front of the West German presidential palace."—Roy Gutman, *Newsday*, June 13, 1989

"**Looking tired and grim**, Gorbachev said that deadly ethnic riots that have broken out recently are still 'isolated seats' of violence."—Alison Mitchell, *Newsday*, July 2, 1989

"Addressing the nation **in sorrowful**

**tones and looking tired**, Gorbachev said the Kremlin had exhausted all peaceful means."—Michael Dobbs, *The Washington Post*, January 21, 1990

"President Mikhail Gorbachev **looked tired but in high spirits** as he cast his vote."—*Financial Times*, March 5, 1990

*When He's Cranky:*

"In response, an **incensed** Gorbachev defended Ligachev as being dedicated to the cause of *perestroika*."—William Drozdiak, *The Washington Post*, March 14, 1989

"[Starkov's] troubles began October 13...when an **irate** Gorbachev called a meeting of senior Soviet editors and broadcasters. The Soviet president **lashed into** the most daring practitioners of *glasnost*."—Alison Mitchell, *Newsday*, October 25, 1989

"Gorbachev was **visibly annoyed** by Sakharov's proposal for a debate [on] the party's political monopoly."—Vincent J. Schodolski, *Chicago Tribune*, December 13, 1989

"Gorbachev was **incensed** to be confronted by a Lithuanian nationalist."—Mary McGrory, *The Washington Post*, January 21, 1990

*When He's Not Sure How He Feels:*

"Gorbachev seems **confused, and often angered**, by the rise of nationalism under his watch."—David Remnick, *The Washington Post*, May 10, 1989

"Gorbachev has been enormously **frustrated** by the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute."—Esther B. Fein, *The New York Times*, August 27, 1989

"Gorbachev may be **confused** but does not appear worried."—Gregory F. Treverton, *Los Angeles Times*, September 18, 1989

"According to an elected official who has seen him recently, 'Gorbachev is **upset, unstable**, unlike himself of a year ago.'"—William Safire, *The New York Times*, October 19, 1989

"For years Mikhail Gorbachev was **deeply worried** about the terrible shape of the Soviet economy. And he still is."—Abe Mellinkoff, *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 11, 1989

—David Shenk





250 YEARS BEFORE THERE WAS A GERMANY,  
THERE WAS A DUTCH BEER CALLED GROLSCH.

Holland was enjoying Grolsch beer when present-day Germany was a patchwork of feuding tribes and fiefdoms. Things have changed since then, but, fortunately for the beer enthusiast, the purely natural, non-pasteurized, uniquely satisfying qualities of Grolsch have not. *Grolsch*

*Tastes the same here as it does over there.*





## YOKO ONO, PHONE HOME

*Fun With Former Phone Numbers of the Rich and Famous*



**S**uppose you recently saw *Mystery Train* and were confused by the film's thick philosophical content. No problem. Call the director, Jim Jarmusch, and discuss it with him; he's in the Manhattan phone book. Or suppose you strongly disagree with something you read in the paper that attorney William Kunstler said. Don't sit there and stew. Call him up at home and tell him how you feel; he's in the book, too.

Manhattan's White Pages lists many sort-of-famous people, among them demi-cult figures Sukhreet Gabel, Quentin Crisp and Phoebe Légère. But really famous people are tougher to reach, as they

generally get new, unlisted numbers as soon as they hit it big. So while speaking directly to a celebrated stranger may not be possible without first passing muster with a squad of handlers and publicists, you can do the next best thing: dial the famous person's *last* listed phone number and talk to the lucky, star-dusted citizen who inherited it. Or let us do it for you.

**Marianne V.**

**SPY:** *Your phone number was Marlon Brando's in 1944.*

**Marianne:** That's nice.

*Have you ever met Marlon Brando?*

No, I have not.

*Have you ever felt that you and he had something in common?*

No, I have not.

*Is there anything you would like to say to Marlon Brando, given the chance?*

Lose some weight.

**Rekha Gupta, employee**

**of Village Candy Inc.: 989-7261**

*Your phone number was Dustin Hoffman's in 1966.*

Really? Are you kidding?

*No. Has anyone ever called for him?*

No.

*Have you ever met Dustin Hoffman?*

No. I just saw his shows on TV.

**Cathy Bailey: 691-1859**

*Your phone number was Robert De Niro's in 1973.*

Oh, really?

*Have you ever met Robert De Niro?*

Nooo...I've been in his apartment, but I've never met him.

*You were in his apartment?*

Yeah. I was looking at real estate.

*Is there anything that you would like to tell Robert De Niro?*

Only that if *he* were buying an apartment, I wish he'd buy it from *me*.

**Rhoda Harvey, employee of**

**Winkler Video Inc.: 753-9410**

*Your number belonged to Lucille Ball in 1932.*

You're kidding! That's so funny! What's your name?

Max.

I love that name; that's my cat's name.

*Do you admire Lucille Ball?*

Oh, sure, she's a riot.

*And have you ever felt that you and she had something in common?*

No, except I dye my hair red, too.

**Employee of Horticultural**

**Creations Inc.: 925-5812**

*In 1986 your number belonged to an actor named Willem Dafoe, who's—*

I know who he is.

*Are you a fan of Willem Dafoe's?*

I think he's a quality actor.

*Is there anything you'd like to say to him?*

No, I have nothing to say to him.

**Daughter of Jeng Hsing Ping: 962-4191**

*Your phone number was Yoko Ono's in 1962.*

That's very strange.

*Strange but true, however.*

I would prefer you called someone else.

**Neal Ruskin and his mother,**

**Ricki Ruskin: 628-5161**

*In 1973 your number was Donald Trump's phone number.*

**Neal:** Yeah, we've gotten some calls for him. And his brother. People call up and ask for somebody-else Trump. We've gotten calls like that since we moved in here about a year and a half ago.

*What do you think of Donald Trump?*

What do I think of Donald Trump? [Long pause] I haven't given it much thought.

*Anything you'd like to tell him?*

No. If I ran into him in the street, or at a function, I wouldn't have much to say. I just think, for all his money, it hasn't done anything for his character, unfortunately. You should talk to my mother.

*Hello, Mrs. Ruskin?*

**Ricki:** Yes.

*You've got Donald Trump's old phone number.*

That's right. I keep getting calls.

*When did you get your first call?*

The day I moved in.

*Who did the person ask for?*

Robert Trump. I don't know who that is, and I couldn't care less.

*And who do they ask for more frequently, Donald or Robert?*

They ask for Mr. Trump, usually.

—Max Cantor

## THE SIXTIES, DECADE OF REVOLUTION: A LOOK BACK

*New Material from the SPY Archives*



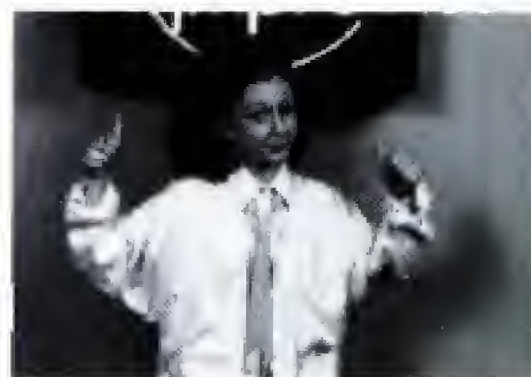
An actual, unretouched photograph that appeared in *Look* magazine in 1966, showing how visitors were welcomed to the California ranch of governor-to-be Ronald Wilson Reagan. See also CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT.



"My new dog is  
half pit bull, half poodle.  
Not much of a guard dog, but  
a vicious gossip."

CRAIG SHOEMAKER

"I had a



SARA GILBERT

"They say beauty  
is in the eye  
of the beholder.  
Yet we all  
agree on ugly,  
don't we?"

DAVE ANDERSON

cholesterol test.



FLORENCE HENDERSON

They found  
bacon."

BOB ZANY

"Last week  
my aunt was cremated.  
My uncle suspects  
arson."

JERRY SWALLOW



MALCOLM JAMAL WARNER



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An Evening  
At  
the Improv**

**A&E.**

Monday  
through  
Saturday  
at 11:00 PM ET



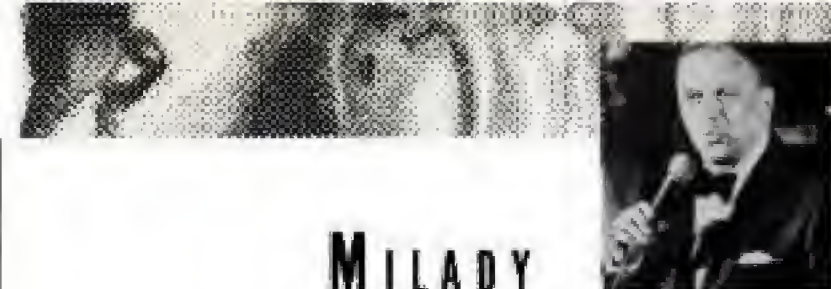
# FINNISH ON TOP



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## MILADY IS A TRAMP

*Frank Sinatra Sings the Classics*

### ANONYMOUS

Summer is icumen in...  
Two sweethearts and the summer wind

### GEOFFREY CHAUCER

This lunge night ther tydes me na reste  
But yet, na fors; al sal be for the beste... is  
yet to come

### EMILY DICKINSON

Where tired Children placid sleep  
Thro' Centuries of noon  
This place is Bliss — this town is Heaven...  
Gee! It's my kind of town  
Chicago is my kind of town

### JOHN KEATS

And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,  
That I shall never look upon thee more,  
Never have relish in the fairy power  
Of unreflecting love; — then on the shore  
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think  
...I did all that, and may I say, "Not in a  
shy way"

Oh no, oh no, not me, I did it Myyyyyy Way

### WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

FIRST WITCH: Where the place?  
SECOND WITCH: Upon the heath.  
FIRST WITCH: There to meet with Mac-  
beth.... Oh, the line forms on the right,  
dear, now that Mackie's, yes, I said Mack-  
ie's back in town — Henry Alford

## FOR OUR FALLEN COMRADES

*First The New York Herald Tribune.  
Then Look. Now 7 Days.*

**W**e are pleased to help the late  
7 Days keep faith with its loyal, albeit non-  
paying, readers.

*The solution to the puzzle of April 18:*

N	O	L	I	V	E	R	N	O	R	T	H	C
A	N	E	E	L	S	S	S	E	T	H	E	L
T	O	N	T	A	H	W	E	E	G	G	S	I
H	N	S	E	R	A	S	E	V	D	U	R	L
A	E	D	D	Y	I	N	G	S	E	A	U	T
N	S	N	E	D	R	A	W	T	E	N	N	E
A	E	D	A	M	S	R	E	R	O	I	C	A
E	L	V	I	S	H	E	M	I	R	S	S	S
L	L	I	W	Y	E	S	U	P	W	H	W	T
W	S	I	S	E	L	A	S	E	L	O	H	W
E	G	W	T	S	V	W	N	S	R	W	A	O
S	A	E	U	O	E	L	I	D	E	E	O	O
T	N	A	N	N	S	O	T	H	E	R	N	D



# TALKING MOTHERF---ING BASEBALL, GODD--- IT!

SPY Salutes the Tardy 1990 Baseball Season With a Piece of 13-Year-Old, Unauthorized Oral History



**A**n unusual audiocassette recently made its way into our possession. The tape — rerecorded and passed on from enthusiast to enthusiast over the years, a kind of sonic chain letter — offers a true baseball fan's delight: actual, uncensored recordings of ballplayers caught in the act of cussing. (As a sort of bonus, the tape also includes Kansas City Royal George Brett's frank assessment of his progress in battling a case of hemorrhoids: "You know how some guys, when they get laid, they like having their girlfriends stick their fingers up their ass? Well, I don't think I'm going to try *that* anytime soon!")

The most instructive sequence on the tape involves Los Angeles Dodgers manager Tommy Lasorda, who was apparently wearing a microphone for the broadcast of the 1977 World Series between the Dodgers and the New York Yankees. Inadvertently, perhaps, Lasorda provides us with an answer to one of baseball's most enduring mysteries: what do managers say to pitchers when they walk out to the mound?

The scene: game four, at Dodger Stadium, with the Yankees leading two games to one. In the top of the second inning left-handed Dodger pitcher Doug Rau — a surprise starter, given his recently sore pitching arm — has just yielded three straight hits. The score is 1-0 Yankees, with runners on second and third. There are no outs. As the tape begins, Lasorda is sitting in the dugout.

**Dodger Stadium announcer:** BATTING SEVENTH, NUMBER 9...THIRD BASEMAN GRAIG NETTLES.

*[A pause as Lasorda walks out to the mound; Rau apparently says something or makes a gesture indicating he wants to stay in the game.]*

**Lasorda:** Fuck no. You can't get the fucking left-handers out for Christ All-fucking-mighty.

**Rau:** I feel good, Tommy.

**Lasorda:** I don't give a shit you feel good — there's four motherfucking hits up there.

**Rau:** They're all fucking hits the opposite way.

**Lasorda:** I don't give a fuck.

**Rau:** I got a left-handed hitter. I can strike this motherfucker out.

**Lasorda:** I don't give a shit, Dougie.

**Rau:** I think you're wrong.

**Lasorda:** Well, I may be wrong, but that's my goddamn job. I —

**Rau:** I ain't fucking hurting.

**Lasorda:** I'll make the fucking decisions here.

**Rau:** *[Unintelligible]*

**Lasorda:** I'll make the fucking decisions here. Okay?

*[At this point the ballpark organist begins playing a jaunty tune, which lasts throughout the rest of the tape and lends the proceedings a strange air of pathos.]*

**Rau:** You let three runs get up on the fucking board yesterday.

**Lasorda:** I DON'T GIVE A FUCK!

**Rau:** Hey, Tommy —

**Lasorda:** DON'T GIVE ME ANY SHIT, GODDAMN IT! I'll make the fucking decisions. Keep your fucking mouth shut, I told ya.

**Unidentified infielder:** *[Unintelligible]* get back off the mound. You want to talk about it, talk about it inside.

**Lasorda:** You talk about it inside my fucking office.

**Infielder:** I'm just saying, talk about it inside. This is not the place to keep talking about it. Okay? That's all I'm trying to say. I'm just trying to avoid a fucking scene out here, that's all.

**Lasorda:** Right. Fucking great for you to be standing out here talking to me like that.

**Rau:** If I didn't feel good, I wouldn't say anything.

**Lasorda:** I don't give a shit, Doug. I'm the fucking manager of the fucking team. I got to make the fucking decisions —

**Announcer:** COMING IN TO PITCH

FOR THE DODGERS —

**Lasorda:** — and I'll make them to the fucking best of my ability.

**Announcer:** — NUMBER 36, RICK RHODEN.

*[Crowd cheers.]*

**Lasorda:** It may be the fucking wrong decision, but I'll make it. Don't worry about it. I'll make the fucking decision. I gave you a fucking chance to walk out of here. I can't fuck around — we're down two games to one. If it was yesterday, that's a different fucking story.

**Rau:** There's a left-handed hitter coming up, what about that?

**Lasorda:** I DON'T GIVE A SHIT! You got three, three left-handed hitters, and they all got fucking hits on ya. Whoever that is, Jackson and that fucking other guy. They all bat, they all hit — that guy that just hit the ball was a left-hander, wasn't he?

**Rau:** I jammed him. You know, the inside part of the plate —

**Lasorda:** I don't give a shit if you jammed him or not, he didn't get out. I can't — I can't let you out there in a fucking game like this. I got a fucking job to do. What's the matter with you?

*[A smattering of applause as Rau finally leaves; Rhoden arrives on the mound, and an unintelligible discussion ensues, presumably as to how to pitch to Graig Nettles. Lasorda returns to the dugout.]*

**Lasorda:** What a fucking pain in the ass, that Rau. I hate to bring him into the second inning with a fucking left-hander. *[Unintelligible]* we can't give 'em two more this fucking early.

*[Unintelligible question from a player or coach.]*

**Lasorda:** Send him back.

**Unidentified player or coach:** Back. Send him back... He doesn't want to go back. Get the fuck back. BACK!

*[Tape ends; the Dodgers go on to lose the game by a score of 4-2, the same tally by which the Yankees would ultimately win the Series.]* ♫



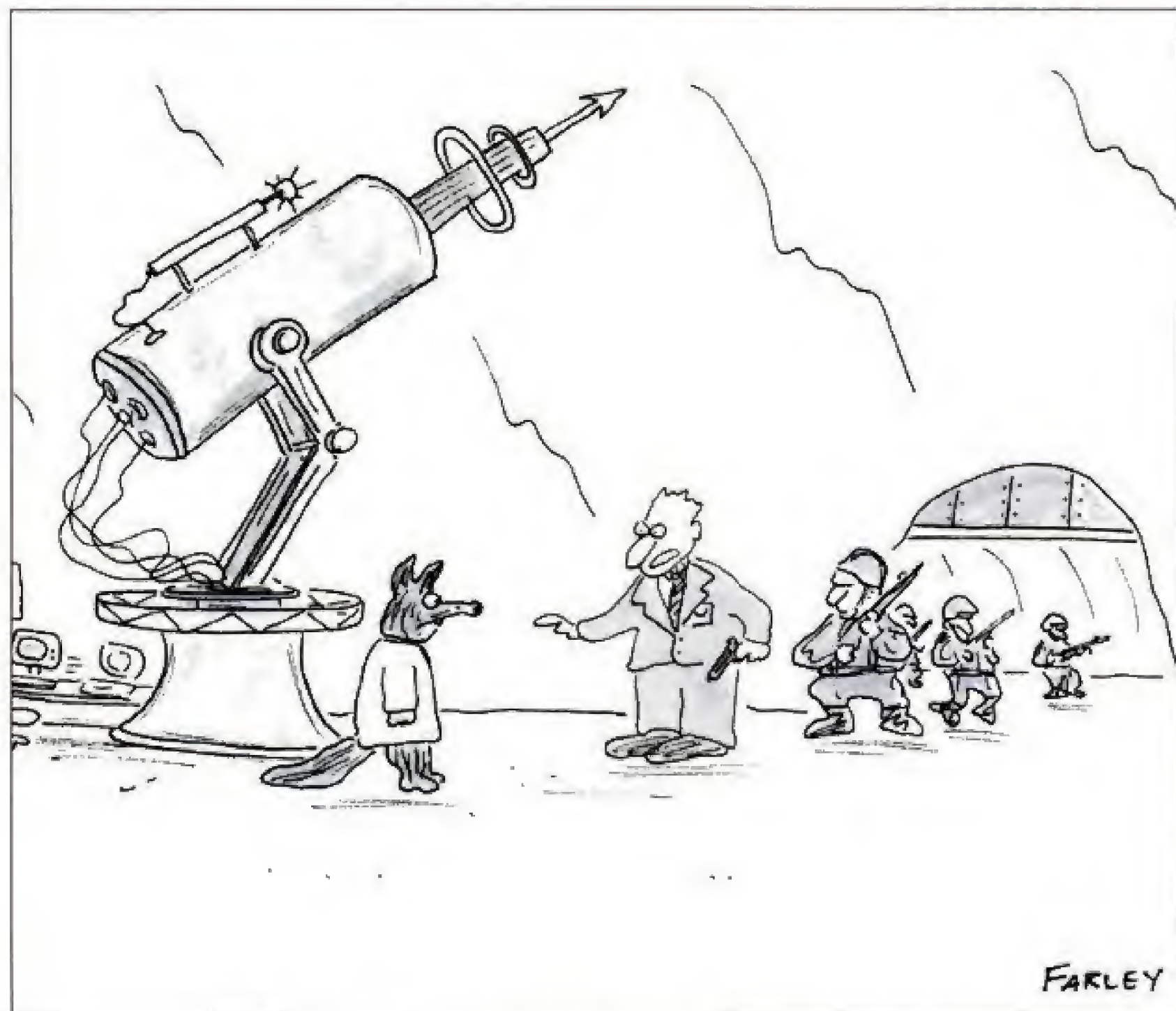
## OUR BIENNIAL *WIGWAG* SCORECARD

### Articles that have already appeared in *Wigwag*, the gentle magazine that bills itself as "A Picture of American Life":

A profile of Fred Rogers  
 A report on various uses for soaps and lotions  
 A chart showing the frequency of garbage collection in various municipalities  
 A visit with a golf pro in New Jersey  
 Ruminations on taking old clothes to a thrift shop  
 An editor's note about how a neighborhood grocery smells  
 An editor's note reflecting wistfully on the shortcomings of the new Mr. Potato Head as compared with the original Mr. Potato Head  
 A look at stuttering  
 David Updike regretting change in Cambridge, Massachusetts  
 A poem about brooms  
 A look at white bread

### Articles that have yet to appear in *Wigwag*:

A profile of Gumby creator Art Clokey  
 An illustrated history of male hosiery  
 A look at clover  
 A profile of *Family Circus* creator Bil Keane  
 Reflections on cleaning out a basement and finding old cans from the 1940s  
 Reminiscences about a memorable maiden aunt in Troy, New York  
 A visit to *Yankee* magazine  
 A photo essay on tractor-trailer mud flaps  
 An editor's note about how a neighborhood hardware store smells  
 A children's story by Louise Erdrich featuring characters from Native American mythology  
 An account of getting one's shoes shined by an old black man in the lobby of a fading downtown hotel in Oklahoma City  
 A visit with a guy who makes banjo strings  
 A report on how dry cleaning works  
 A look at bed-wetting  
 A visit to a graham-cracker factory



"You've single-handedly managed to bring the civilized world to the brink of destruction!  
 Bad dog! Bad dog!"

## THE SPY LIST

...which might be called, in old-fashioned terms, unnatural.

...told his wife he was traveling to Dallas on campaign business; instead...

...mob-connected...

...Tim McCarver, like the other members...learned to hold his liquor by guzzling water until he...

...some colleagues seem convinced that while [she] is the more overtly appalling of the two, [he] is the more evil.





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THE INDUSTRY



Mike "the Manipulator"



Warren

ISHTAR REDUX?  
WHY WARREN  
BEATTY'S *DICK  
TRACY* HAS  
DISNEY ALL IN  
A TIZZY

More News from  
the Powerful Agen-  
cy That Is Not  
Based in Langley:  
Mike "the Ma-  
nipulator" Ovitz  
has decided to  
William Morris-

ize Creative Artists Agency, a feudal operation heretofore streamlined to the point that it had no organization chart, no hierarchy save that Mike was king and everybody else wasn't. Well, it's not that way any longer. Rosalie Swedlin, Rick Nicita and Jack Rapke were all moved up to become copresidents of motion pictures. Lee Gabler was named head of television series and miniseries so that Bill Haber could spend more time doing whatever it is he does in his château in France. And Tom Ross was named head of the music department. The question is, why?

Part of the reason for all this movement is that CAA was in danger of losing some of its top agents — specifically Nicita and Rapke. Rapke represents some of the agency's top directors. He very nearly took the job at Columbia that Jon Peters and Peter Guber awarded the statesmanlike Frank "the Man Who Put *E.T.* in Turnaround" Price. The agent that CAA is most in danger of losing, however, is Mike himself. It is believed that the great man is simply reconfiguring CAA so that there will be a smooth succession when he leaves the agency later this year to head MCA.

*You're So Vain:* Disney's marketing department has been having fits over how to sell Warren Beatty's sleek comic-book epic, *Dick Tracy*. Out-and-out dreck is generally "dumped" by the studio with little or no money spent on advertising or promotion. The decision is usually made during a series of Sunday-afternoon conference calls following the opening of a picture.

Disney research has shown that young people — the core audience for most blockbusters — are actively turned off by Beatty. In the words of one Disney marketing vice president, they find his aging-Lothario routine "pathetic." (Some think the cooling of the Beatty-Madonna romance has much to do with his envy over his costar's fanatic younger following.) This of course presents something of a problem for Disney, which had originally planned to sell the film on the basis of Beatty's perceived box office appeal with younger ticket buyers.

In short, the people at Disney have begun to worry that *Dick Tracy's* biggest liability may very well be the star himself. During the indefensibly lame Barbara Walters interview with Beatty after the Oscars — on the West Coast the Walters special *follows* the awards broadcast — one senior Disney executive sat squirming in front of his television set, growing increasingly mortified by Beatty's shy-ingenue act. Each time Beatty danced around one of Walters's puffy questions, the executive would shout to others in the room, "There goes another \$10 million at the box office."

Beatty seems oblivious to Disney's misgivings about *Dick Tracy*. Stills from the film were released only to those magazines that guaranteed they would put Beatty or the movie on the cover. And as has long been Beatty's custom, in the months prior to the film's release he indulged in his own peculiar form of postproduction finickiness.

As each stage of the movie was completed, the editors were instructed to compile a reel of Beatty's close-ups (including outtakes) for the star. He would then take the reel home and stay up long into the night, fretting over which were the perfect takes — not the ones that were the most dramatic or moving or funny, mind you,

but the ones in which Beatty looked best.

*Trims and Ends:* The Hollywood wedding of the year — or at least of the first accounting quarter — was that of Jon Davis, son of jumbo zillionaire and itinerant mogul Marvin Davis. There was, of course, the requisite bachelor party for young Davis, thrown by Arnold Schwarzenegger and producers Larry Gordon and Joel Silver on the set of one of Silver's movies. And this being Hollywood, not one but a dozen women were ushered in for the evening's entertainment. And this being the age of supercareful sex, the women were there to service not the revelers but one another, in all manner of configurations and couplings. While the women entertained, all the guests just watched, Chauncey Gardiner-style. All, that is, except for the host-cum-reveler with the difficult-to-pronounce name, who reportedly had to be physically restrained (*Down, Arnold, down!*) as he playfully tried to mount various clusters of women again

and again. The wedding itself — held at Marvin's Beverly Hills home — was a black-tie affair attended by everyone in Hollywood, from Lew Wasserman on down. Sean Connery showed up, but in a sport jacket and tie. During the ceremony two Davis factotums shimmered over to where he was seated and whispered something in his ear. Once the nuptials ended, Connery slipped out, rematerializing ten minutes later at the reception in a tuxedo that fit him perfectly. It is believed that the Davises — for whom no detail is insignificant — must have had standing at the ready a tailor and a wide selection of tuxedos, in the event that a guest might show up in improper attire.

See you Monday night at Mortons.

— Celia Brady

At Jon Davis's

bachelor party

the host had to

be restrained

(*Down, Arnold,*

*down!*)



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## THE ULTIMATE DRIVING MACHINE

Experts Agree: Terrorists Prefer BMWs



**T**errorism has seldom made it past America's borders. But consider that two notable U.S. attacks—the San Diego pipe-bombing of a Navy captain's car and the abduction of Patty Hearst—had something in common: a BMW. This is more than coincidence. In Europe and the Middle East, some of the most infamous acts of terror—shootings, kidnappings, car bombings—have been conducted behind the wheel of the ultimate driving machine.

Americans may be seduced by the BMW's interior amenities—heated seats, compact-disc changer, Nappa leather, walnut trim—but certain foreigners have other reasons to drive the car. Its extraordinary handling is ideally suited to the sidearm bomb toss (September 1986, Paris). The trunk is spacious enough to accommodate large charges of TNT (August 1985, southern Lebanon). Since the late 1970s, international-terrorism experts have registered no fewer than 40 BMW-related incidents of terrorism throughout the world. (By comparison, the Chevrolet Camaro has been linked to only one.) Interestingly, the BMW also seems to be a favorite among potential targets of terrorism. Heads of state and foreign executives often buy it for its combat-readiness. Terrorists know this. So despite extras like ballistic bomb blankets and 7.62 NATO armor, the cars are still subject to assault.

What follows, then, is a register of the Bavarian heritage of quality, performance and luxury. And ad hoc combat.

**December 1989. Frankfurt, West Germany.** While being driven to work, Alfred Herrhausen, the head of West Germany's largest bank, is killed in a bomb attack by Red Army Faction terrorists. His car: a BMW.

**December 1989. San Salvador, El Salvador.** Antigovernment guerrillas build barricades in wealthy neighborhoods using late-model BMWs.

**October 1989. Woodbury, New Jersey.** Venezuelan millionaire Armando Alvarez, imprisoned on charges of "making terroristic threats," escapes from the Gloucester County jail. His reported getaway vehicle: a BMW.

**September 1989. Beirut, Lebanon.** A car bomb planted by Syrian terrorists kills two and wounds ten in a crowded marketplace. The car: a BMW.

**September 1989. Medellín, Colombia.** While driving to his metal-can factory, former mayor Pablo Pelaez Gonzalez and his driver are assassinated when their white BMW sedan is caught in a hail of 9mm-automatic-pistol fire.

**May 1989. Athens, Greece.** A remote-controlled car bomb destroys former Greek public order minister George Petsos's red BMW, blowing out its windows, puncturing its tires and twisting its chassis. Petsos, his chauffeur and his bodyguard escape serious injury.

**May 1989. Sidon, Lebanon.** Three West German relief workers are kidnapped and held hostage by three Palestinian gunmen in a silver BMW.

**March 1989. San Diego, California.** The FBI registers what seems to be the "first overt act of terrorism by Middle Eastern radicals in the United States" when Sharon Rogers, the wife of Captain Will C. Rogers III, skipper of the USS *Vincennes* (which had mistakenly shot down an Iranian passenger plane over the Persian Gulf), survives an explosion from a pipe bomb planted in her Toyota van. The attackers drive off in a red BMW. More ominous still are the reports that three "Middle Eastern-looking" men were observed scouting out the Rogerses' residence before the bombing. Their reconnaissance vehicle: a green BMW.

**November 1988. Sidon, Lebanon.** Three bearded gunmen abduct Peter Winkler, a Swiss Red Cross worker. "They cursed us, using dirty words," Winkler's driver says later. The kidnappers flee the scene in a BMW.

**September 1988. Palermo, Sicily.** Mafia killers ambush Judge Antonino Saetta and his son. They fire 20 rounds into the judge's car, a Lancia, and then escape in a stolen BMW, which is later found engulfed in flames.

**August 1988. Cologne, Germany.** Hans-Juergen Roessner and Dieter Dekowski end a 53-hour terror spree in a BMW. The high-speed chase starts when the men

take two bank employees hostage, demanding \$225,000 in cash and a guarantee of free passage. After a couple of car switches and the hijacking of a bus carrying 32 people, the robbers agree to release all but one of the hostages in exchange for a car—a BMW. Police commandos finally catch the bank robbers on an autobahn.

**July 1988. Duisburg, West Germany.** Two IRA bombs injure nine British soldiers at the Glamorgan barracks. The suspects in the attack flee in a yellow BMW with Dutch license plates.

**July 1988. Johannesburg, South Africa.** Two killed, 30 wounded when a bomb planted in a BMW explodes near a rugby stadium.

**June 1988. Beirut, Lebanon.** A green BMW packed with explosives is found before detonation. (The 325i has 14.3 cubic feet of trunk space, room enough for 1,792 sticks of TNT.)

**February 1988. Beirut, Lebanon.** A man with a passport bearing the alias Jacques Meurant, later identified as deputy chief of the Lebanon branch of the French secret service, is shot three times. He dies next to his red BMW.

**April 1987. Johannesburg, South Africa.** A BMW fitted with an explosive device is left at a dealership, ostensibly for repairs. The ensuing blast causes no injuries but tears apart the front end of the car.

**January 1987. Bekaa Valley, Lebanon.** A Libyan envoy is shot dead and found slumped in his red BMW on a road to Beirut.

**September 1986. Paris, France.** Two mustachioed men in a black BMW drive past the Tati department store, the French equivalent of K mart, and deposit a bomb in a nearby garbage can. Five are killed, 53 wounded. Police later find that the BMW, which has been repainted gray, is registered to Wahid Gordji, an Iranian diplomat posted at the Paris embassy.

**September 1986. Beirut, Lebanon.** A lone terrorist shoots French military attaché Colonel Christian Goutierre with a silencer-equipped pistol and then escapes in a green BMW.

**July 1986. Munich, West Germany.** The Red Army Faction plants a 22-pound bomb in the exclusive suburb of Strasslach. The



cable-detonated device destroys an armored, bulletproof dark-blue BMW limousine, killing Karl-Heinz Beckurts, one of West Germany's best-known nuclear scientists. The security personnel following Beckurts in a light-blue BMW escape injury.

**March 1986.** *Geneva, Switzerland.* At the annual international car show a BMW executive tells a reporter, "We carry out thorough research on our potential clients; otherwise terrorists could just place orders to see what the latest gimmicks are."

**November 1985.** *Frankfurt, West Germany.* A silver 1975 BMW 525 sedan loaded with explosives blows up in the parking lot of a U.S. Army PX, injuring 35 people.

**August 1985.** *Southern Lebanon.* A Syrian-backed terrorist group sends a suicide bomber to attack Israel's allied militia. Sixty are killed or wounded (by the bombers' count; 30, according to Lebanese state television) when the TNT-laden BMW sedan crashes into a checkpoint at a South Lebanon Army base.

**June 1985.** *Madrid, Spain.* Terrorists linked to the hijacking of a TWA jet shoot at a Libyan driving a BMW. Speaking through an interpreter, one of the two accused Shiites explains, improbably, "Our objective was not the diplomat but the car."

**March 1985.** *Beirut, Lebanon.* Three gunmen kidnap French national Marcel Fontaine and drive off in a BMW.

**February 1985.** *Luxembourg.* Terrorists suspected of stealing 828 pounds of dynamite escape custody and flee in a Dutch-registered BMW.

**July 1983.** *Rome, Italy.* The 15-year-old daughter of a Vatican messenger is kidnapped by a man in a black BMW seeking the release of failed papal assassin Mehmet Ali Agca.

**May 1983.** *Chino, California.* Symbionese Liberation Army terrorist Emily Harris ducks into a waiting orange BMW upon her release from eight years of imprisonment for kidnapping Patty Hearst.

**September 1982.** *Paris, France.* Forty-seven people are injured after a bomb explodes in a car with Israeli diplomatic license

plates. Police look for a BMW sedan observed near the scene.

**June 1982.** *London, England.* The Israeli ambassador to Britain is shot and critically wounded by three Arab gunmen outside a BMW showroom on Park Lane.

**October 1981.** *Beirut, Lebanon.* An 88-pound car bomb packed with steel nails explodes on a residential street, killing 1 person and wounding 20. The car: a BMW.

**October 1981.** *Milan, Italy.* Red Brigade terrorists shoot and kill two antiterrorist police in a shoot-out on a busy street and flee in a BMW.

**September 1981.** *Beirut, Lebanon.* Four pro-Iranian gunmen wait in ambush in a white BMW and assassinate French ambassador Louis Delamare a few hundred feet from his home.

**May 1981.** *Modigliana, Italy.* The 25-year-old son of Italy's biggest taxpayer is forced to the side of the road and kidnapped by

two masked gunmen while driving his BMW.

**February 1981.** *Padua, Italy.* Neofascist terrorists kill two carabinieri in a shoot-out on the bank of a remote canal. Later, police find an abandoned black BMW believed to have been used by the terrorists.

**July 1979.** *Rome, Italy.* Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Varisco is shot dead by Red Brigade terrorists while driving to work in his brown BMW.

**November 1977.** *Bellevue, Washington.* Members of the left-wing radical George Jackson Brigade express support for terrorists in Europe by exploding a pipe bomb. Their target: a BMW dealership.

**October 1977.** *Turin, Italy.* A left-wing organization called the Revolutionary Armed Group bombs a BMW showroom to protest the West German government's jailing of three urban terrorists who committed suicide in prison.

—Allen Kurzweil



THE WIZARD OF EAST 81<sup>ST</sup> STREET



THE TIMES



Max



Punch



Abe

The newly hired *Times*-man's or *Times*woman's first day of work gets tucked away in memory, much as would the expectant first day of a seemingly blessed marriage that over time becomes bitter and nasty. In an effort to make that first day on West 43rd Street a trifle more comprehensible, if not actually bearable, the *Times* has prepared (but not yet published) a breezy new Baedeker, one rich in humor and insight. It may help conscripts better understand their new place of employment, but it probably won't give much of a hint as to what they have got themselves into. And since it is always fun, if not instructive, to discover how an organization as important and self-serious as the *Times* thinks of itself, let's slick back our hair, splash on a little Canoe, pucker our lips and pretend we are first-day hirelings trying to figure out what this wondrous journalistic empire is all about.

"Welcome to *The New York Times*, and to its world headquarters in the center of Times Square," the guide begins helpfully. It should be said that the person awarded the thankless task of describing the *Times* to newcomers is Metro reporter Todd S. Purdum, whose gift of subtle drollery soon becomes only too apparent. Indeed, as he begins his grand tour of the physical plant with a hilarious send-up of the sort of first-day announcements bullhorned out at places like Alcatraz and Sing Sing ("The building in which you will spend a good part of the next years of your life was built in 1913..."), it becomes obvious why Purdum will one day take his place up there alongside such legendary *Times* wits as Francis X. Clines, William E. Geist and Russell Baker.

Purdum proceeds in a mock-stentorian voice with a description of the third-floor newsroom, "the heart of the paper... pre-

sided over by senior editors whose offices are situated along the 44th Street wall of the room." Each of the various "section desks," such as foreign or national, he writes, is divided into three parts. "First is the day desk, composed of the section head and deputy and their assistants. These editors manage their reporters, assign them to cover stories... and generally set the agenda for chronicling their particular corner of the world." Next comes the "backfield desk," made up of editors who begin pouring into the office sometime after lunch. "They confer with the day desk about the stories in progress and supervise the placement of each day's news into the allotted space. These experienced editors fix the lengths of stories and edit their leads and opening paragraphs, to assure that each story is focused as precisely as possible." Last, says Purdum, setting the hook for a big laugh, is the copy desk, where "editors expert in grammar, style and arcana... comb reporters' stories for errors and flaws..."

Still laughing? I am. The copy desk, you see, is the fiefdom of assistant managing editor Al Siegal, the one man who more than any other is responsible for keeping the *Times*'s prose gray and cheerless and free of style or verve. While striving to such a noble end, the popular fellow has nonetheless incurred the wrath of a number of reporters, including the great Frank Rich himself. In the course of copy-editing one of Rich's theater reviews, Siegal changed *acrimonious* to *bitter* even though Rich had already used *bitter* earlier in the piece. The editor "expert in grammar, style and arcana" later informed a reporter who inquired about the change that he does not like *acrimonious* because it is pretentious and overly Latinate.

Purdum then segues into "Deadlines and Editions." "For reporters in most sections

the deadline for copy is about 5 p.m.," he writes. The explanation for this phenomenon, as we learn in the memo, is copy flow: a fixed number of pages must be finished and in the composing rooms at five-minute intervals from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m., when the first edition is locked up. When deadlines are missed, Purdum writes, "production is delayed, trains, buses and planes are missed, circulation is lost, costs rise and tempers flare." Fret not, though. Purdum assures us that even such minor unpleasantness is bound to arise at a paper whose planning is "a collegial effort." Here again we must commend the memo's author on his fertile wit.

There is no shortage of humdrum house-keeping details: where the staff physician can be found; how to get an identification card and a locker ("All employees are entitled to a locker, or at least part of one").

Like all good showmen, Purdum closes his tour on a festive note, namely food and drink. "The 11th floor cafeteria serves cafeteria-style food. The fare," he points out in the restrained deadpan that has by now become the Purdum hallmark, "is not elaborate." Purdum then advises the newcomer that any number of additional off-facility dining venues are within walking distance of the Times Building. Some of the establishments mentioned are Al's Delicatessen, Beefsteak Charlie's and Cookie Odyssey.

Oddly absent are Sardi's, Orso and 44, the restaurant in the Royalton Hotel—in short, lunchtime haunts of the higher-ups. The grand

inquisitors, it would seem, prefer to trade their harrowing tales of torture and career destruction well out of earshot of their victims and would like the newcomer to get used to this system of restaurant seniority from the start.

—J. J. Hunsecker

Purdum will  
one day take  
his place  
alongside such  
wits as  
William Geist  
and Russell  
Baker





Thank Dad for being more proud than angry.

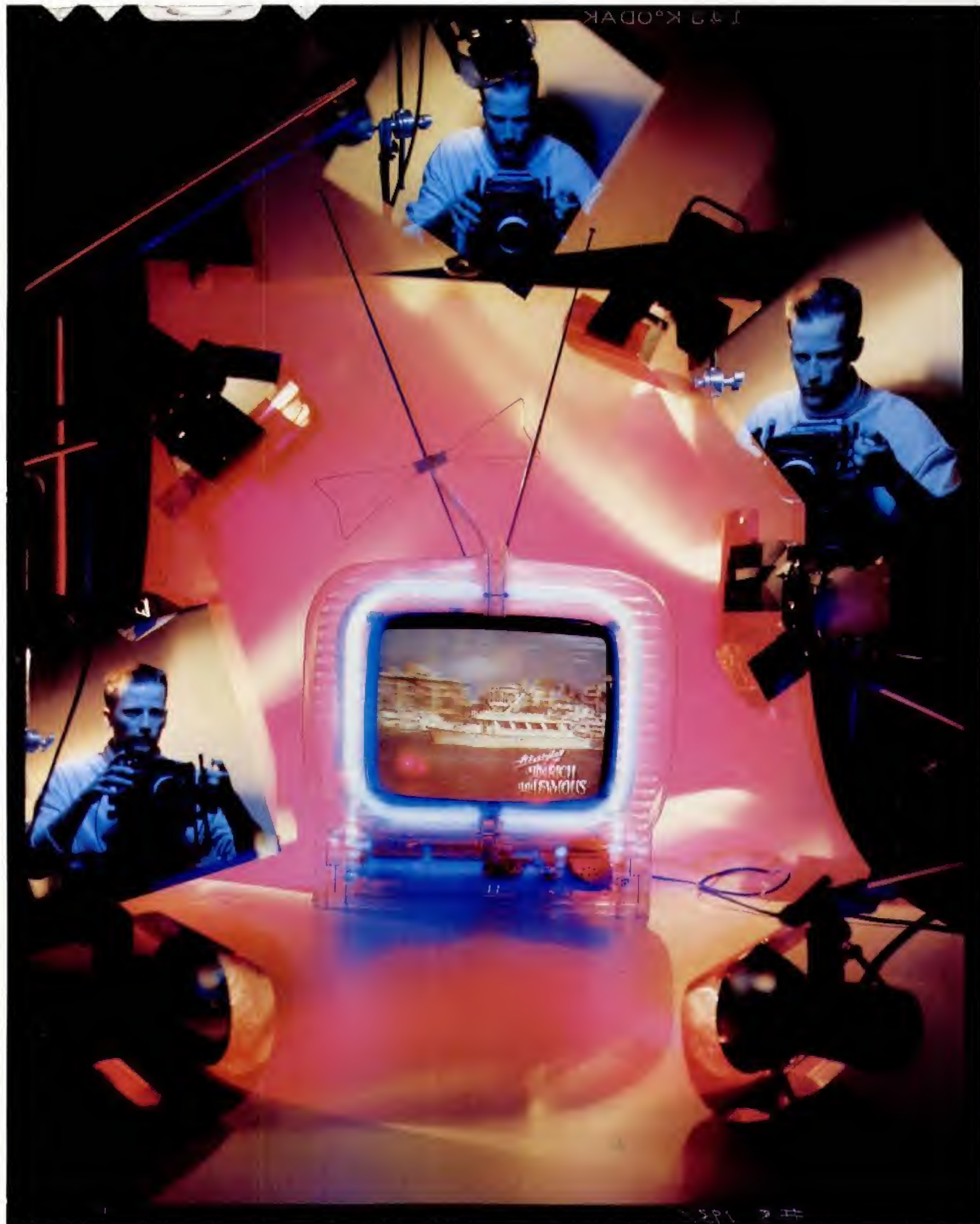


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INSIDE THIS ILLUSTRATION

The camera is a Cambo 4x5; the studio is located in SoHo above a famous restaurant; the photographer himself is reflected in three mirrors. The ostensible subject is a see-through Lucite television set tuned to a program that purports to provide behind-the-scenes glimpses of celebrity life.



Wristwatches with see-through faces; telephones with clear plastic casings; television news shows in which the newsroom is the set; restaurant kitchens open to the world; magazine and newspaper columns that purport to tell what goes on behind the scenes in book publishing, law and other boring fields that don't really concern the layman—what do these phenomena have in common? Just this: all pander to the manic quest to go backstage, to penetrate the veil, to rip away facades and lids and wrappers and finally catch an unobstructed glimpse of reality at its realest. So VINCE PASSARO steps back and coolly observes that in the age of Lucite and C-SPAN and *Entertainment Tonight* and exposed air-conditioning ducts, Americans want to be

# INSIDE EVERYTHING

THE MODERN MANIA FOR KNOWING MORE THAN YOU NEED TO  
KNOW ABOUT THE WAY EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD WORKS

camera were stuck on a lifeboat in a nasty  
lunched white man in a suit standing next to  
Nothing looks arranged. The background seems  
ery, implying great wads of material and little  
pans in a clever, even cynical, imitation of ran-  
large pieces of equipment to the sides and in the  
about yet, you know this is a commercial, because  
(b) the production values are higher and the direc-  
a TV show. The businessman is talking to some un-  
puter (whose brand name is isolated every few sec-  
doesn't seem to be talking about it in the glib, as-

Watching this commercial, we are meant to be-  
a real businessman who likes his computer so

our TV picture heaves and lurches as if the  
squall. It zooms back and forth past a well-  
a table and a computer. The set is minimal.  
to be made up of some kind of silvered drap-  
concern for effect. As the camera drunkenly  
dom movement, you see lights, cords and other  
foreground. Although you don't know what it's  
(a) it's not the show you were just watching and  
tion more imaginative than those usually permitted  
seen presence. He is talking about the Epson com-  
onds during the sweeps of the crazycam). But he  
sured manner normally associated with commercials.

lieve we are privy to the candid, heartfelt remarks of  
much that he's willing to take time off from his job to do



The Loud family cavorts, argues and ultimately disintegrates—and you are there!; below, superstation WWOR's news team pretends to have a story meeting.

an ad for it. The producers of the ad, we're supposed to think, are shooting him in his unguarded moments before he must act for the camera. What they seem to be showing you is not a commercial itself but the making of a commercial.

Of course, this is manifestly a lie—the finished ad is right there before your eyes, visually rich, impeccable, astute and occupying hundreds of



thousands of dollars' worth of airtime. By presenting what looks like a 30-second documentary about the making of a commercial instead of a mere commercial, the producers intend to make us think of ourselves as not just viewers or consumers but the possessors of special knowledge. Epson hopes we will be gladdened by our special status and feel a bond with the computer whose ad we have seen being made, a bond similar to the loyalty we would feel for a product whose factory we'd visited with our fifth-grade class (*And then they mixed up the mayonnaise in vats as big as our garage*) or a movie whose set we'd been allowed to enter.

The advertisement's creators are playing off a habit of culture that has been years in the making and is now as ingrained and regular as a tic: they are exploiting our desire—indeed, our bored expectation—that it is possible for anyone to be

boring apparently interesting: an entire cable channel devoted to meteorological isobars; two simultaneous best-sellers on investment banking; newspaper columns with titles like *Inside Law*; whole newspaper sections on science. On commercial airline flights we can now listen to the arcane chatter between pilots and air-traffic controllers, and until recently on American Airlines we could even have a pilot's-eye view of takeoff and landing.

And insidermania has become not just a creed of culture and politics and commerce but a design principle, most notably in buildings such as the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris and the Lloyd's building in London, where features that would normally be concealed (steam and electrical ducts, pipes and elevator shafts) are applied decoratively to the outside. This aesthetic can be traced back to the Bauhaus and Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building, which was designed to have its supporting I beams function also as its facade. The only problem was that New York fire codes demanded all structural beams be covered with insulation. As a result, Mies had to add new I beams to the exterior as decoration. So much for form-is-function design: not-entirely-honest honesty was born.

The concept of *Inside Everything* appeals particularly to Americans. It promises the obliteration of mystery and the realization of the democratic ideal of absolute openness. Nothing is hidden; there are no secrets. Unfortunately, as with the elegant but mendacious Seagram Building, it is quite easy to make the outside *look* as if it were the inside, even if doing so means interposing one more layer between the observer and the real core of the thing observed. Indeed, this is the abiding paradox of *Inside Everything*: instead of hidden interiors, what we usually see are merely more-complicated-looking exteriors.

Nowhere is this more obvious than on TV news programs. Every network news show and most local shows, in order to convey a flavor of authenticity, display their robotic anchors sitting at a desk—pod—command center *inside the pulsing news-*

## YOU CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW

A Compulsive Insider's History of the World



Thirteenth Century B.C.: Men of Troy ensure their slaughter when they fail to look inside a wooden horse.  
Second Century A.D.: Greek physician Galen lays the groundwork for autopsies with his

study of human corpses.

1458: Pope Pius II writes the first formal autobiography, exposing the politics behind the Vatican's closed doors.

1800s: Mass production of window glass begins.

1837: Hans Christian Andersen publishes "The Emperor's New Clothes."

1850: Victorian England spends its sublimated energies building the Crystal Palace in London from 300,000 sheets of glass. Inside are displayed

expert in any subject, that the straight dope is only a channel or two away, that all of us, anytime we want, can enter a realm of intensely privileged information once reserved for insiders alone.

THE NEAR RELIGION OF INSIDE EVERYTHING decrees a kind of multidisciplinary gut-spilling. Insidermania has made matters once considered

room itself! You are left out of nothing. Cords snake around the anchors' feet while attractive assistants charge to and fro in the background. This combination of indecipherable, expensive-looking technology and bustling young professionals is meant to convince you that the locus of power is near. Never mind that since the stories for the show were scheduled hours ago, there's no need to be there;



every second of the broadcast lets a viewer feel close to the inner workings of the process in which the news itself is made. On the New York City area's "superstation," WWOR-TV (Channel 9), they go even further, purporting to show correspondents and news executives in daily discussions of breaking news stories. You are there.

Live TV is now considered exciting because it's more real, less fabricated, more inside. And so *Prime Time Live* takes us inside *Saturday Night Live*. The "bloopers" TV shows, consisting of flubs and outtakes from other TV shows, are appealing only insofar as they make us feel like we're members of the crew, on the set, behind the scenes.

And now we have the chance—hell, the *obligation*—to know this week's Nielsen rating for every TV show we watch. Most Americans probably have a more profound interest in and understanding of the workings of the February and May and November "sweeps" than they do the electoral college. Is there anyone left who doesn't know that each rating point represents 921,000 homes with televisions? Or the exact price-per-minute of advertisements aired during the Super Bowl? Or that the 1988 Olympics failed to meet NBC's projections of profitability?

Inarticulate football announcers diagram plays for us right over the freeze-frame of the play they're talking about. Newspaper sports pages, once devoted to pure diversion, are now filled with such inside dope as critiques of the *broadcast* of yesterday's big game. Watching a ball game these days is deemed an incomplete experience unless one knows both the batter's and pitcher's salaries as well as their incomes from product endorsements.

Almost every new movie is accompanied by either a book or a shorter movie about the making of the movie—in fact, a recent well-reviewed documentary, *Driving Me Crazy*, focuses largely on the fitful process of its own filming. *Burden of Dreams*, Les Blank's 1982 film about the making of Werner Herzog's 1982 movie, *Fitzcarraldo*, was better received than the work that inspired it. If all this

made movies—now they also pretend to make movies at their vast new "studio" theme parks. This is simulated show biz insiderism that admits it's false, attracting millions of Americans eager to pretend to peek behind the scenes. So savvy has the average American become about the inner workings of show business that it is almost a Hollywood commonplace that the focus-group method of divining the public's reaction to movies has been tainted, at least in Los Angeles, by the participants' semiprofessional second-guessing (*I liked the hero, but I found the obvious product placement off-putting—and no way is Bruce Willis worth \$7 million a picture*).

Deal-craziness has taken over almost every realm. Consider book publishing. Again, the papers are full of data the average reader doesn't really care about but somehow feels he'd better pay attention to anyway. Did literate people use to know what an author's advance was? Was it widely known, say, how much Saul Bellow hauled in—cloth and paper—for *Henderson the Rain King*? Or what the publicity budget was for Joyce Carol Oates's first novel? Now we know. We know too that Si Newhouse, the owner of about a quarter of the book business and half of all glossy magazines, is an extremely "private" man who gets to the office at four in the morning, schedules 6:00 a.m. meetings, eats lunch at the center booth at The Four Seasons, walks around in his socks and sweatshirt in his "unassuming" office on the 14th floor of the Condé Nast building, goes home at 3:00 p.m. to read and exercise, buys paintings by Jasper Johns for \$17 million and likes to give his various managers, publishers and editors a "free hand" when it comes to running their operations, at least until he abruptly fires them. So what are we to think of all this? Is Si Newhouse a shrewd publisher or a zany one, a virtuous man or a contemptible one? None of us care, as long as we feel we're inside.

One can't even check out the tawny bods in *Sports Illustrated's* annual swimsuit issue without

Thanks to Al Haig, we now know how erratic, medium- to high-ranking government sources clumsily leak information to journalists; thanks to James Baker (below), we now know how canny "senior administration officials" self-servingly leak information.



arcane devices far beyond the needs of most visitors.

1869: Celluloid, the first transparent plastic, is developed

and used in carriage and early automobile windows.

1891: George Gissing publishes *New Grub Street*, which takes the reader inside the publishing world's grim realities.

1895: X rays are discovered by Wil-

helm Conrad Röntgen in Germany; it will be 69 years before comic-book-reading boys in America can send away for *X-Ray Spex*.

1899: Sigmund Freud publishes

The Interpretation of Dreams, which becomes the cornerstone of psychoanalysis and Woody Allen's screenplays.

1938: Thornton Wilder writes *Our Town*. No props, no scen-

doesn't make us feel inside enough, our local paper weighs in every week with the cumulative box office grosses of Hollywood's new releases. Each of us can reckon practically to the dollar the extent of Jack Nicholson's profit participation in *Batman*. In 1937 how many moviegoers knew the particulars of Myrna Loy's contract with MGM? It used to be that Disney, MGM and Universal just

being distracted by gratuitous behind-the-scenes glimpses. This year there was a publisher's letter taking readers inside the shoot: "Every day, the swimsuit crew was awakened at 4 a.m."—everyone who's *anyone* on the inside is up at four—"in order to be on location by sunup," chirps the publisher, who we know doesn't write his own letters anyway. We read about the leaf blower used to keep the



Former porn star Annie Sprinkle is not the first performing artist to rescue health education from the classroom—the hardy explorers in *Fantastic Voyage* did the same thing, more or less, back in 1966.

models' hair looking bouncy, the ladder the photographer used for overhead shots in the surf. Every picture that one is supposed to be mesmerized by in the middle of the magazine is clinically deconstructed up front. A photograph of sandy-butt human mannequin Kathy Ireland is matched in the publisher's letter by a photograph of a senior editor actually brushing the sand onto her rear.



Aren't you glad you weren't fooled, that you didn't for a moment think she just sat down on the beach and got sandy?

The insider habit is overtaking even our teeniest concerns. Watches come without faces so we can see the gears whiling away the hours, although this teaches you nothing about watches or time. The circuit-board innards of telephones, television sets and calculators have never been less mechanical—and thus more pointless to look at—but there they are, transparent Lucite-encased gadgets and appliances, proliferating. Literal transparency is not enough: with every man an expert, we consider it our right and obligation to own sophisticated medical devices like blood-pressure-measuring and blood-sugar-measuring machines. It is no longer necessary to skulk behind

walk around with clear plastic purses, briefcases, shopping bags, so you can see their belongings. Yet when it comes to intentions, we're still confused: *Does that woman really want me to see last night's underwear in her vinyl satchel, or is that a mistake? Does that man really want me to see the copy of Penthouse peeking out behind the folders in his see-through briefcase?*

Stylish restaurants overdo insiderism in a big way. From Spago to Sam's, chic food impresarios expose the workings of the kitchen. The name of every fashionable dish is a long, precise description of where it is from and how it is made: Puget Sound salmon poached in chicken broth and raspberry vinegar, with fresh Virginia chervil; chardonnay-glazed Chesapeake Bay hen lightly grilled over birchwood with fresh sesame seeds and curry butter. Insiderism is unavoidable even if all your meals are taken at home: a humble box of Cheerios announces that each bowl contains four grams of dietary fiber, seven grams of sucrose and other sugars, three grams of monounsaturated fat.

Some luxury autos these days feature computer displays on the dash that can present a diagram of the motor for the driver, with graphics that diagnose where and what the trouble is. Yet despite the availability of this aid, fewer people than ever know how to fix their cars. There are more and more books on how things work, the apotheosis of which is that bible of the Insider Dweeb, David Macaulay's *The Way Things Work*. Its light, entertaining tone somehow makes it clear that the reader, loafing at his ease, will never bother to try to repair the things he is reading about. Annie Sprinkle, the New York performance artist and former porn star, does a live, arts-grant-funded show in which she appears in various stages of undress and talks about the intimate details of her life. The culmination of the performance is when she invites audience members to come up to the stage to view, with the help of a speculum, her cervix. Annie Sprinkle has the perfect grasp of the weird physics of Inside Everything—certain levels of exposure mean there is no real exposure at all. The conclusion is ines-

ery, a "stage manager" speaking directly to the audience.

1949: Philip Johnson builds his all-glass house in Connecticut.

1952: Ernie Kovacs launches his television show, which has a regular segment

called *You Asked to See It*.

1953: Dow Introduces Saran Wrap.

1954: Rear Window.

1956: Milton Levine introduces the Ant Farm.

1957: Renwall begins marketing the Visi-

ble Man plastic-model kit.

1961: The Dick Van Dyke Show purports to reveal what

really happens inside a television

comedy program. Theodore White publishes

The Making of the President 1960.



1962: Oscar Mayer Foods Corporation introduces the see-through vacuum-seal bacon package.

1964: Benihana of Tokyo opens first U.S. restaurant; grills are on tables.

a telephone answering machine, waiting to hear a caller's voice; with a Caller I.D. device, you can see a digital readout of the caller's number while the phone is still ringing.

Fashion now features underwear as outerwear, zippers as decoration. There are even T-shirts with anatomical guides, painted pictures of the organs located underneath the appropriate spots. People

capable: the closer we get to the inside of things, the less we seem to understand them and the more we think we don't have to.

SO ALL-CONSUMING HAS INSIDERMANIA BECOME that it is hard to remember sometimes what life was like before its advent. *When*, one asks oneself, *did stereos start coming with those annoying electronic*



graphs that flicker up and down or left and right according to the intensity of the sound? When precisely did I find out who Saatchi and Saatchi were, and why did I feel it was vital to know? What did imminent parents do in the days before the sonogram was invented, allowing them to see a ghostly, blurry image of their child in the womb?

To get a sense of how it all started, go back to the early 1970s. Two important things happened then to scar the consciousness of America and convince us that everyday reality was a deceptive sham. One was the Watergate hearings, when President Nixon's mask of denials finally cracked open to reveal the guilty visage of a liar and a paranoid. The terms *cover-up* and *stonewall* entered the common language, as did the name for their heroic opponent: *investigative reporter*. The other and possibly more devastating trauma occurred with the appearance of a book by ex-Yankees pitcher Jim Bouton called *Ball Four*, which revealed that Mickey Mantle used to slam bus windows on the hands of kids trying to get his autograph and that other players, at the ballpark and in their hotels, regularly cursed, and used mirrors, binoculars and other optical aids to try to see women's private parts.

Near chaos followed. Day after day the morning papers carried embarrassing revelations concerning our most trusted national institutions. The CIA was accused of engineering political assassinations. PBS, in its excruciatingly candid documentary series *An American Family*, planted a TV camera inside a "typical" middle-class household and found a world of sexual aberration and ugly marital animus. In *The Final Days* it was revealed by Woodward and Bernstein—whose own personal habits we were soon familiarized with in the movie version of *All the President's Men* and later in the novel based on Bernstein's marriage to Nora Ephron—that as the Vietnam War was dragging on, a trembling President Nixon drank heavily and threatened to bomb the North Vietnamese. Once, he was in such a state that he couldn't get the child-proof cap off his pill bottle, and in the morning his aide found the bottle with its top chewed up.

The president was prohibited from waging secret wars. The CIA was forced to notify Congress of covert operations. It soon developed—and remains true today—that the average newspaper reader could name the chief of staff quicker than he could name the secretary of Defense. There were to be no more invisible men on the inside running the show without our knowledge.

Reporters these days are bent on creating the illusion of political insideness by endlessly writing and broadcasting indistinguishable stories on "spin controllers," "media strategies" and other

## MEANWHILE, THE NEW OPACITY IS COMING ON STRONG

### A Catalog of an Enticing Countertrend

A tremor in the Zeitgeist as marked and influential as the Inside Everything trend is bound to stimulate a countertrend. Although its outlines are still blurry, this emerging pan-disciplinary aesthetic—known to sociocultural insiders as the New Opacity—is based on a studious, Zen-like cultivation of obscurity, obliqueness and mystery. What follows is a selective catalog, couched in suitably elliptical prose, of some of the diverse phenomena that constitute this important trend.

**THE BEATLES (THE "WHITE ALBUM").** Started it all.

**THE MOVADO "MUSEUM" WATCH.** Black watch face lacks numbers. Does not give date.

**UMBERTO ECO NOVELS.** Dense, obscure, hermetic, seemingly popular.

**CD PLAYERS.** Inscrutable black boxes concealing complex high technology.

**ITINERANT NIGHTCLUBS.** No fixed addresses, no advertising, no way to find out about them unless you're meant to know.

**VOGUE FOR ONE-PIECE WOMEN'S BATHING SUITS.** Meretricious exhibitionism is outré in the postbikini age.

**TELLER, OF PENN AND TELLER.** Short. Compact. Mute.

**THE SPY LIST.** Entirely random list of seemingly related names? Or meaningful list of seemingly random names?

**NEXT COMPUTERS.** See CD players, above.

**ALL-DAY WEARING OF SUNGLASSES.** Anna Wintour probably picked it up from heroin-addicted blues singers.

**VOGUE FOR UNLISTED PHONE NUMBERS.** Not just for famous people anymore.

**ROYALTON HOTEL.** Steve Rubell-created. Philippe Starck-decorated. Virtually unmarked entrances. Restaurant's matchbooks have little cutout squiggle and a phone number but no name.

**PRESIDENT BUSH'S SYNTAX.** Clipped. Insanely concise.

1966: Raquel Welch is shrunk and injected into a human body in *Fantastic Voyage*.

1969: The Selling of the President, the cynical, really inside account of a presidential campaign, is published.

1970: Exposed brick becomes popular. The

Mary Tyler Moore Show purports to reveal what really happens inside a TV news program.

1973: François Truffaut makes *Day for Night*, about a director's troubles filming a movie. PBS broadcasts a 12-part docu-

mentary, *An American Family*, the true story of the Loud family's ups and downs. Timothy Crouse publishes *The Boys on the Bus*, a book about reporters covering the 1972 presidential campaign.

1974: Congress passes the Freedom of Information Act.

1975: Hollywood Babylon.

1979: C-SPAN begins live televised coverage of Congress.

1981: Ryan O'Neal stars in *So*



All this was more than the American people could bear; in an unconscious collective decision, we resolved never again to allow things to get so far away from us. The Democrats reformed themselves, forswearing secret deals to deliver the presidential nomination, making the smoke-filled room moot. We elected Jimmy Carter. We pushed through the Freedom of Information Act.

**150 WOOSTER.** Virtually unmarked, hard-to-find restaurant for New York City insiders.

**CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY HEADQUARTERS.** New. I. M. Pei-designed building. Impersonal. No sign out front.

**ADS FOR NISSAN'S INFINITI AUTOMOBILES.** Rain. A wheat field. Wind and waves. Actual product rarely shown.

**Z.** Pseudonymous foreign-policy expert. Distrusts Russians. D



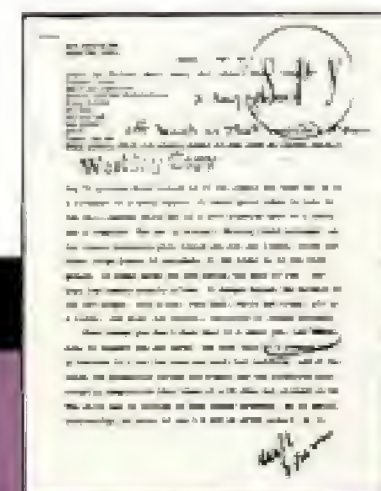
once-hidden tools of power. These stories allow us to feel even deeper inside than we did before, although we still don't know what's really going on. By the 1980s men in government couldn't even leak stories to the press in secret—that is, there was coverage of the leaking process itself, from which we learned that Alexander Haig was the administration's champion leakmeister and that James Baker manipulated reporters constantly and deftly. And we realized that the newspapers would often follow any leaked quote with an attributed quote from the official who'd done the leaking. It was like a leak *guide*. Did it mean no one leaked anymore? Of course not. Leaking was the official manner of doing business, regardless of how well exposed the process was. As long as we are aware of the duplicity, we are satisfied.

It was the genius of the Reagan administration to tap into the public's appetite for armchair insiderism and masterfully exploit it for political gain. It seemed that the more we were allowed to know about the various speech writers, communications wizards and PR experts who really ran the show inside the White House, the happier we were to let them do as they pleased. The more we knew about how skillfully we were being manipulated, the less manipulated we felt. Of course, when it turned out that the real powers behind the power behind the throne were not actually members of this overexposed cast of insiders but an obscure Marine lieutenant colonel and a San Francisco astrologer, the public was shocked—not so much by the substance of the revelations as that they hadn't been revealed earlier. After one becomes convinced that he or she is truly backstage, there is nothing quite as disturbing as suddenly finding out there is a hidden dressing room.

Everyone wants to know what previously only specialists knew. Are we better off? Expertise in everything seems to have entailed a loss of what we used to think of as the high ground, the ability to look over the general pattern of things and come to too involved with detail, too much of an expert,

was the only president in recent memory to step back from the day-to-day evasion of governing to try to get a handle on the big picture. Carter, after a few weeks in self-imposed exile, jaw resting on fist, elbow on knee, concluded in the infamous Malaise Speech that, guess what, things had gone pretty badly off track. "All the legislation in the world," Carter warned, "cannot fix what's wrong with America." He was rapidly shown the gate.

The craze for being Inside Everything will last. There is money in it. There are people who don't bother to read the paper every day but subscribe to \$1,000-a-year newsletters and buy computers with expensive data-base links so they can have access to inside information. *New York* magazine has *Intelligencer*, even *Time* now has *Grapevine*, television has *Entertainment Tonight*, and *Entertainment Tonight* has *E.T. Insider*. Even Peggy Noonan is a media celebrity. Does this lead anyone to ask why the president needs a team of people to think up what he should say, or who Lincoln's speech writer was for the Gettysburg Address? No way. Americans have gone so far inside that we may not be able to find our way back out. ☹



## HOW THIS ARTICLE CAME TO BE

### Inside the Making of "Inside Everything"

The development of a magazine story is a halting, imperfect, all-too-human process. The initial idea for "Inside Everything" was hatched in 1989 during one of the regular Tuesday editors' lunches held in the so-called back conference room of the SPY offices. The editors wondered aloud (or "brainstormed," as we say in the business) about who should be assigned to write the piece, and Vince Passaro, a New York freelancer best known as a book reviewer, was chosen on the strength of a profile he had recently written of James Wolcott, the *Vanity Fair* media critic. Editor Walter Kirn, who knew Passaro from their days together at *7 Days*, placed the phone call. When Passaro expressed ambivalence about the idea, Kirn invited him to lunch at a local bistro, where the deal was closed over a meal of New York strip steaks, both of them cooked medium rare.

The first draft of the manuscript (the first page of which is reproduced above) was deemed enormously promising. In the end the author was granted an extra week to

Fine, a movie about designer jeans that have see-through plastic panels in the seat.  
1983: Vestron releases *Making of Michael Jackson's Thriller*, which purports to reveal what



really happens behind the scenes at a video shoot.  
1985: Mikhail Gorbachev announces glasnost. Sting releases his self-deifying documentary *Bring on the Night*, which includes a videotape

of his girlfriend giving birth.  
1986: First issue of SPY. Over the next three years it will inaugurate a monthly column on the inner workings of The New York Times, assemble and publish the highly confidential client roster

of Hollywood's Creative Artists Agency and print its own private correspondence with Donald Trump concerning a story about his wife, Ivana.  
1988: *The Way Things Work*.  
—Michael Hainey

conclusions about them. Edward R. Murrow didn't become famous simply for doing an exhaustive investigative exposé of Joseph McCarthy—he denounced him. Imagine somnambulant newsmen Robert MacNeil and Jim Lehrer getting on the air and lambasting a United States senator today. It is interesting that the relentless little Jimmy Carter, who got so badly stuck with a reputation for being

complete a second draft. The second draft arrived on Tuesday, March 6, and copies of it were eventually distributed to a researcher, a copy editor and SPY's art director.

Kirn did not finish editing the piece until two weeks later—indeed, it was the last task he completed for the magazine before his sudden departure on March 20. Over the next week SPY's coeditors tinkered with the essay, and a final, 3,928-word-long edited version was dispatched by messenger to Passaro's home ten days later. Not long thereafter, Passaro received a reasonable four-figure sum for his work. ☹





MONUMENTAL MARGARITAS.

CUERVO GOLD MAKES IT.

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In the old days primogeniture went like clockwork: The oldest son, as official heir, would get the house, the title, most of the assets and fond parental attentions; one younger son would go into the church, one into the military and one into the City. No questions asked. But now everything's up for grabs, and siblings are free to squabble over anything—money, inheritance, insurance, windfalls, who gets to sit in the front seat, who gets the family dog, who gets the oil paintings of the family dog. In the postprimogeniture modern world, if one sibling manages to get control of the family business, another goes straight to Hazelden, while a third is likely to drain the family finances by trying to buy a political career. And at tense family gatherings the sniveling battle cry of the contemporary black sheep resounds:

# MOM ALWAYS LIVING THE LIKED YOU SIBLING RIVALRY LIFE-STYLE BEST

*Rivalry*: the word has a bracingly British, fair-play, Eton-and-Harrow sound to it. It even has a brisk, open-air etymology, stemming as it does from the Latin *rivalis*, "one using the same brook as another." Friendly trout fishermen, aiming sidelong glances down the grassy bank! There is the lighthearted rivalry of college-conference opponents, involving the pilfering of mascots and sorority girls. Romantic rivalry? One thinks of neat Shakespearean plots, Restoration comedies. True, corporate rivalry may entail a certain amount of illicit photography with tiny cameras. But no rivalry gets so keen, so blood-nasty, as sibling rivalry.

Ever since Cain bopped Abel with a hoe, things have been problematic between siblings. Parental love is fluky: this we all know with a vengeance, no matter what our trough position. After all, Cain was the oldest. What good did it do him? First God—not, strictly speaking, Cain's father, but kind of the ultimate Dad, in His tendency to slip into the do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do mode—first God prefers Abel's flock of firstlings to Cain's perfectly adequate but less flashy agricultural offerings. Then He tells Cain, vaguely, "Thou shalt rule over him." Uh-huh. What's a confused older brother to do? Murder 1, that's what. And for Cain, that was only the beginning. But that's just the kind of trouble sibling rivalry can get you into.

*Mom always liked you best*: from the hoked-up but not entirely unaffected sibling-rivalry comedy of the Smothers Brothers back through the ages, this has been the haunting cry of the dishonored sibling. Esau said it to his brother Jacob.

by James Kaplan

Esau may have been older, but Esau, the Bible tells us, was a hairy man, and Jacob was smooth. And we all know what moms think of smooth guys. Take Eddie Haskell. Sure, June Cleaver might have got that censorious little pout on her face whenever Eddie went into his shtick, but if you think that deep down, June wasn't a sucker for Eddie's grease, you've got another thing coming. The battling Quaid brothers in Sam Shepard's *True West*—what was that all about if not impressing Mom?

Speaking of Wally and the Beav, theirs was a suspiciously *unrivalrous* relationship, one that places their admittedly





Liza Minnelli and Liza wanna-be Liza Furlong, her sister



Cain: definitely not Abel's keeper



Hyannis Port favorites: Dad's pet, Joe Jr., right, and runner-up JFK



Nancy Sinatra and the only one of their offspring who can bear them



Nancy Sinatra walks all over brother Frank Jr.



Ronald and Leonard Lauder: only one can run the family business.



Gloom sisters: the Brontës



Typcasting: Randy and Dennis Quaid playing brothers in True West



Michael Jackson fronts his less-profitable siblings.



orella's wicked, nosed steps



Candice Bergen obliged to promote her more popular wooden brother, Charlie McCarthy



The Wonder Years: archetypal, hormonally torqued sibling rivalry



## BIRTHRIGHTS AND WRONGS

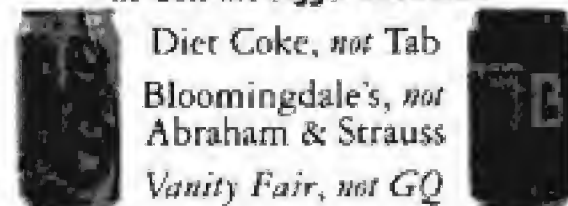
### Primogeniture Winners

Donny Graham  
Malcolm  
"Steve" Forbes Jr.  
Jonathan Tisch  
Leonard Lauder  
Christie Hefner

### Primogeniture Losers

Lally Weymouth  
Tim, Robert,  
Christopher, Moira Forbes  
Steve Tisch  
Ron Lauder  
David Hefner

### Who Gets the Bigger Allowance?



Diet Coke, *not* Tab  
Bloomingdale's, *not*  
Abraham & Strauss  
Vanity Fair, *not* GQ  
Knopf, *not* Pantheon

The evil stepsisters, *not* Cinderella

### Goody Two-Shoes

Jim Hoge

### Black Sheep

Warren Hoge



Eric and Peter  
Douglas

Michael and Joel  
Douglas

Jimmy Carter

Billy Carter

Tatum O'Neal

Griffin O'Neal

Prince Andrew

Prince Edward

Manhattan

Staten Island

The IRT

The IND

Minneapolis

St. Paul

Bugs Bunny

Daffy Duck

Macintosh computers

Apple II

New York City

New York City

police

fire fighters

### Sibling Rivalry Classics

*East of Eden*

*The Bible*

*Tom Jones*

*Dallas*

*King Lear*

*True West*

*What Ever Happened  
to Baby Jane?*



### Sibling Rivalry Standard-Bearers



Dominick and  
John Gregory Dunne

Olivia de Havilland  
and Joan Fontaine

Romulus and Remus

Branford and  
Wynton Marsalis

Irving and  
Arthur Penn

Zsa Zsa and  
Eva Gabor

Brian and  
Keith McNally



Touchstone Pictures and Hollywood Pictures

### Postimes/Professions of Less-Favored Siblings

Country-club manager (amateur golfer Jerry  
Palmer works at his brother Arnold's club)

Tell-all-book author (Jamie Skylar is  
trying to publish a book accusing her brother  
Don Johnson of being a homosexual  
drug dealer who abused her as a child)

Failed mayoral candidate

Alcoholic

Stunt double

Novelty-beer manufacturer

Stripper

Kidnappee

memorable show squarely in the category of Eisenhoweroid kitsch. (*Kitsch* and *shtick* are anagrams, by the way.) But TV has transcended all that, at least if *The Wonder Years's* delightfully verisimilitudinous, refreshingly brutal Wayne Arnold — a thoroughly necessary counterpoint to his simpering younger brother, Kevin — is any example.

Of course, not only brothers are sibling rivals. What about Regan, Goneril and Cordelia; Jane Austen's peppy yet contentious Bennet girls; Cinderella and the steps; Olivia de Havilland and Joan Fontaine; Joan and Jackie Collins; Hannah and her sisters? All these female sibs have struck unforgettable competitive sparks. Not to mention Gypsy Rose Lee, who was driven to tiresome displays of phony erudition by her jealousy of Baby June. And, well, we all know what they say about such supposedly harmonious groups as *les soeurs* McGuire, Andrews, Pointer and Lennon. Far be it from me to dispute compellingly ironic entertainment clichés! As for Amy, Jo, Beth and Meg — girls, I'd like you to meet Wallace and Theodore....

What about boy-girl siblings? Forgive the generalization, but in mixed broods, there's always this protection thing going on. Girls protect their little brothers; boys protect their little sisters. But somehow sisters are often able to trick their brothers into protecting them and then, while nobody's looking, grab the inside track. Take the fabulously wealthy Ann Getty: former publisher, 727 owner, bon vivant, member of many boards. *Both* her brothers are walnut farmers — admirable walnut farmers, to be sure, but walnut farmers nonetheless. Or poor Griffin O'Neal, a human punching bag from the word go. Why? Heavy-lidded eyes, too many freckles — and Y chromosomes.

Parental favor isn't necessarily a one-way street. Sometimes the most-doted-on child is simply the one sibling who doesn't despise the parents. Or, as in the case of hated parents Ronald and Nancy Reagan, it is the one sibling (Ron Jr.) who has not, to date, written a deeply unflattering book about them.

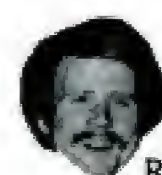
And then there's talent. Talent is a funny bug, which lights where it will. Or does it? Which comes first, talent or parental favor? Does Frank Sr. prefer Nancy to her modestly gifted brother because "These Boots Are Made for Walking" is more his style than Frank Jr.'s pale imitations of his own hits, or is "Boots" the product of many happy childhood hours in clouds of Brut on Daddy's knee? Or perhaps it's that fathers — particularly thuggish, allegedly mob-friendly fathers — always like their little girls best. As for birth order, it is as naught in the nourishment of talent. Often as not, in fact, talent will settle on one of the youngest of a large litter, who — left to his own devices, as such children often are — gathers and hones his skills while his brothers and sisters go about their oafish ways. The most striking example in recent history leaps poignantly to mind: pity poor Jackie, Tito, Jermaine and Marlon! Why futz around with sibling rivalry when lightning has struck? Why, envy, of course — the same emotion that reportedly prompted two Jackson brothers recently to pay a New York nightclub deejay \$100 to play some old Jackson 5 numbers "but none of Michael's solo stuff." On the other hand, whatever big parental brownie points Michael scored by being the most talented and most easily merchandisable child must certainly have been wiped out when he fired his manager — that is, his father.

The competition of sibs is a complex riddle that neither science nor even the Science Times promises to solve in the near future. Who will unravel the mysteries of such weirdly covalent yet distant pairs as Shirley MacLaine and Warren Beatty, Steve Jobs



and Mona Simpson? Or of such not quite equally gifted but bitterly opposed sibs as Ray and Dave Davies? Or William and Henry James, *who had to put a whole ocean between them*? Who can say why fate subtly favored tan, dynamic producer Robert (*Chinatown*) Evans over his equally tan and energetic yet somehow not quite as classy brother Charles (*Monkey Shines*)? Who wants to think about why Candice Bergen had to take hind teat to a ventriloquist's dummy? I defer to nature's enigmas.

Sibling rivalry is a painful and confusing subject to nearly all of us, with the notable exception of one group: *kids without siblings*. You'd think that the only child would be the good-tempered, placid soul, virtually neurosis-free — and yet what do only children do? It's a matter of record. They make up imaginary brothers and sisters. ☛



Appointments secretary

**Revenge of the Talented**

Ron Howard vs. Clint Howard

Debby Boone vs. Cherry Boone

Liza Minnelli vs. Lorna Luft



**Places Where Sibling Rivalry Is Most Prevalent**

Around deathbeds

On low-rated talk shows

On the tennis court at Hyannis Port

**Tragic Repercussions of Sibling Rivalry**

Favored sons (Fred Trump Jr., Joe Kennedy Jr.) tend to die young

Frank Stallone's movie career

*Prime Time*, by Joan Collins



## Part II: A Case Study

# MOM ALWAYS LIKED WHY LALLY WEYMOUTH, KATHARINE GRAHAM'S HIM BEST DIFFICULT DAUGHTER, DOES NOT RUN THE WASHINGTON POST

Like many children of the rich and powerful, Lally Weymouth, the socialite journalist and daughter of *Washington Post* and *Newsweek* board chairman Katharine Graham, is in a position of great vulnerability: people are practically *looking* to hate her. By virtue of being a multimillionaire third-generation V.I.P.—and despite being an occasionally very charming person, a devoted mother and an extremely hard worker—she represents to many people all that is feudal and high-handed in the world. And each time Weymouth confirms these preconceptions—such as the time she ran into an acquaintance at an airport, allowed him to lug her bags aboard the plane and then, once seated, turned to him and said, “So I hear you like Hitler,” or the times



she has walked up to *Newsweek* employees and regally informed them, “My mother is *really mad* at you”—Weymouth's critics feel slightly more justified, a bit less surprised by her behavior. In effect her critics lower their expectations. Over the years, they have continued to lower their expectations—and *Lally Weymouth keeps on meeting the challenge*.

She is zealous. She is abrupt. She is noisy. In the manner of a rich, brattish child, she throws a brilliant party but can make an unpleasant guest: once, when required to wait about five minutes for a table at a Manhattan restaurant, Weymouth became incensed, screamed at her companion and proceeded to fly into a thrashing, flailing rage. She was, according to one of the restaurant's owners, “uncontrol-

lable, completely wacko.”

But for all the things that Lally Weymouth is, she is perhaps best defined by what she is *not*. She is *not* the publisher of *The Washington Post*. Her quiet, careful younger brother Donald holds that distinguished post, and Lally's resentment at his appointment seems to have informed much of her life. Having been passed over, she employs a slew of behavioral gambits that appear to be aimed at getting the attention that might, in a perfect world, have been accorded her. And herein lies the problem: her methods do not inspire affection.

“I frankly don't understand why Lally has so many critics,” says R. Emmett Tyrrell, editor of the irreverent conservative journal *The American Spectator* and a

by *Henry Alford*

close friend, a *very* close friend, of Weymouth's. “I think that they're all—a lot of them—simply sexist. They don't think that a







was extremely close to her father, Phil Graham, the brilliant, manic-depressive, hard-drinking publisher of *The Washington Post* from 1946 to 1963. He was "the person I cared for most in the world," Weymouth has said. On August 3, 1963, when Lally was 19 years old, Graham took a leave from the mental hospital to which he had voluntarily committed himself, and later that day he shot himself dead. "I thought it was the end," Weymouth said later. "He was always the someone there in case you did something disastrous." In addition to the anguish that the suicide caused her, it has also led Weymouth to wonder upon occasion what her father would have done for her: she has told friends more than once that were her father still alive, he would want her to be where Donny is now.

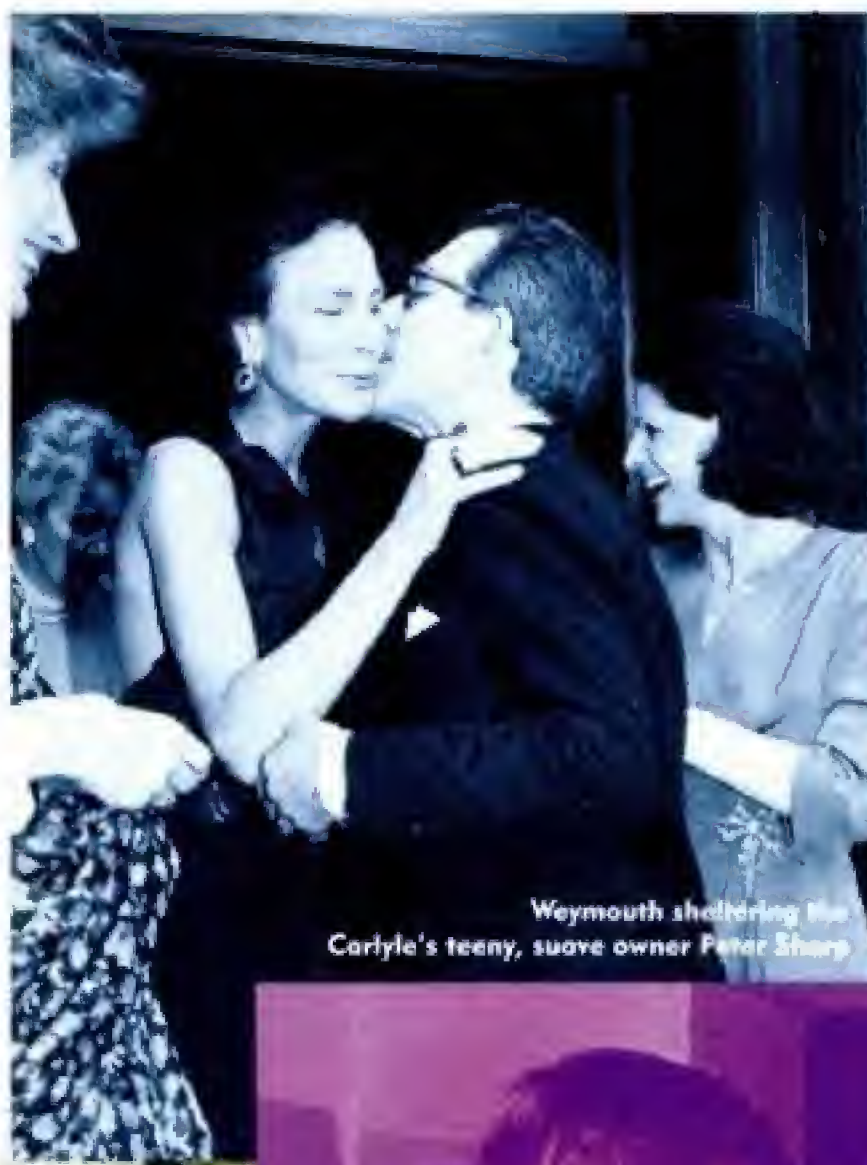
Donny is, of course, Weymouth's younger brother Donald. He became publisher of *The Washington Post* at 33 in January 1979 and received voting control of the second-largest chunk of *Post* stock (only his mother's is bigger). By all accounts Donald Graham is conscientious, earnest, a straight arrow. According to Weymouth, he went to Vietnam because "he thought it unfair that rich kids could get out of the draft" and returned to Washington, D.C., and became a policeman because "he feels to be a good publisher you should really know the town you live in." After that he made a slow and seemingly eight-year climb up the *Post* masthead, working on both the editorial and business sides of the paper. It was her oldest brother's conscientiousness and nose-to-the-grindstone hardheadedness to which Weymouth was no doubt alluding when, encountering turbulence while flying over the Alps once with everyone in her family except Donald, she announced to the others, "If this

plane crashes and we all die, then Donny will get all the money, and he won't even know how to enjoy it."

As if it weren't enough that her brother holds the job she thinks she should have—particularly given that she is the oldest of the four Graham siblings and thus might be construed as the victim of traditional primogeniture—there is the added sting provided by her mother's intense devotion to Donald. Kay Graham and Donald spend a good deal of time together and are said to be more or less similar in character and temperament. Weymouth, on the other hand, reminds people of her father, whose raucous wit was regularly blasphemous.

Sources close to the family say that Kay Graham, who is patrician, a bit steely and unabashedly old-fashioned, is bewildered and made uncomfortable by her daughter's high-strung, shrewish behavior. When Mrs. Graham brought Weymouth to the 1988 Democratic convention in Atlanta as *Newsweek's* guest, Weymouth sat at her mother's side through most of the convention and appeared to have been placed under a gag order. During a *Newsweek* luncheon with a key Democrat, however, Weymouth finally let her true colors shine through. The topic at hand was Michael Dukakis's lack of foreign-policy experience, a topic about which Weymouth clearly felt she had something to say. She became increasingly agitated throughout the luncheon and was visibly straining at the leash, desperate to get in her two cents about Dukakis. Finally, unable to stem her passion, Weymouth blurted out volcanically, "My God! That man's never even been to Paris!"

Some people close to Weymouth feel that she might be deliberately trying to vex her mother or to get revenge. They



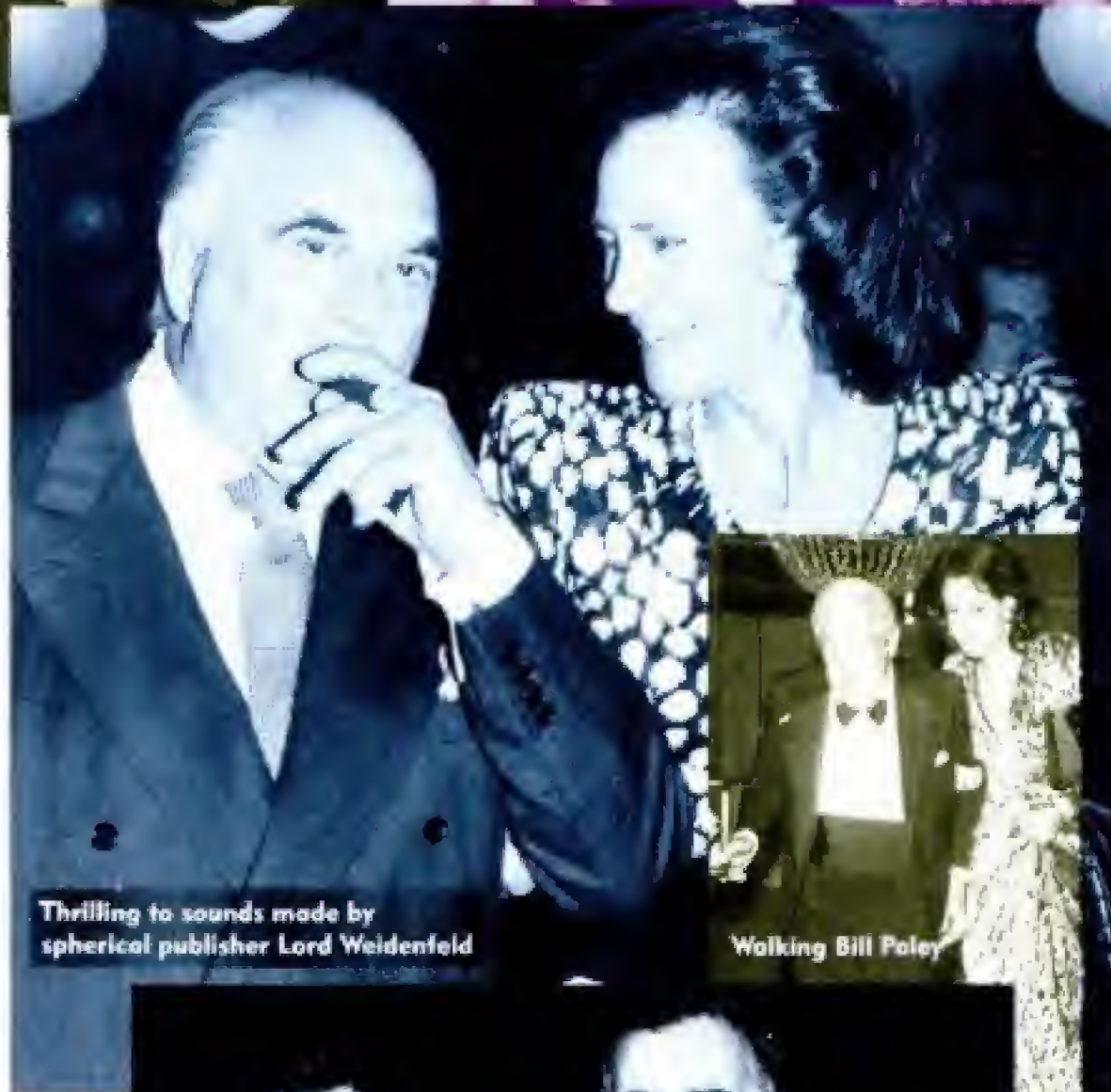
Weymouth sheltering the Carlyle's teeny, suave owner Peter Sharp



Sharing a flossbulb with Oscar de la Renta

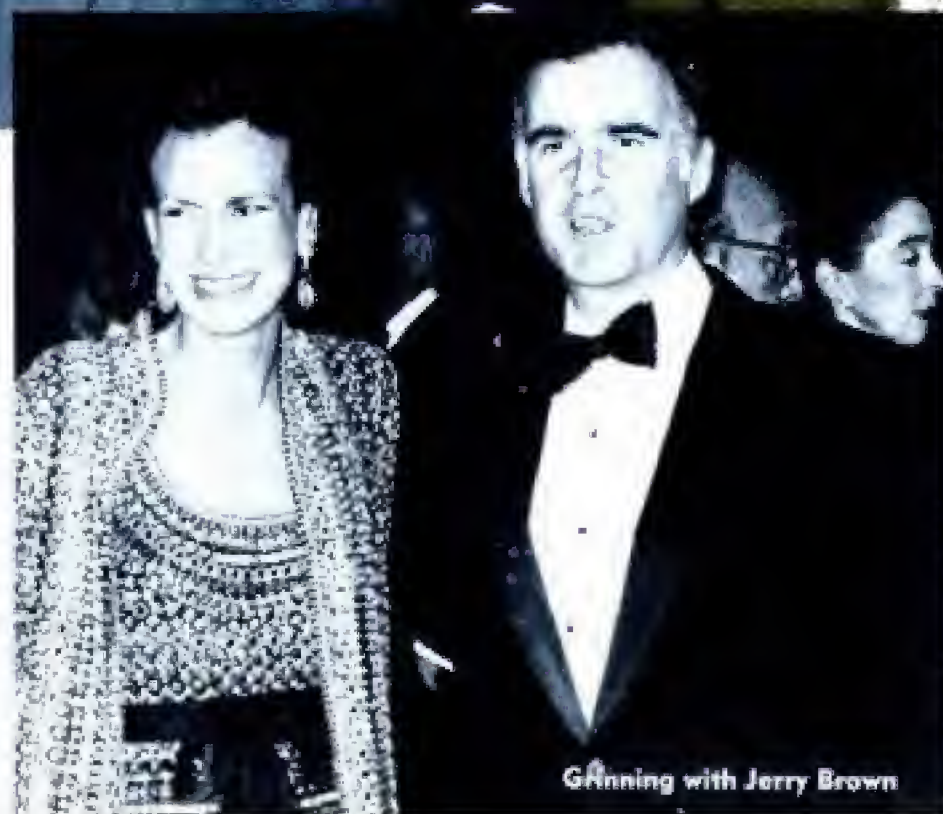


Looking improbably entranced by George Will



Thrilling to sounds made by spherical publisher Lord Weidenfeld

Walking Bill Foley



Ginning with Jerry Brown



cite Weymouth's romance in the late 1970s with Alexander Cockburn, the relentlessly anti-Israel pundit, as an attempt to shock Kay Graham. The pairing of Cockburn, the dedicated Marxist, and Weymouth, the millionaire journalist, was more than a little screwy. On one typical night out, sitting in a stretch limousine outside a Broadway theater, Weymouth became enraged at her chauffeur for not moving hastily enough and screamed for *someone* to make this *idiot* fucking drive. Finally,

Favorite son: Katharine Graham and young Danny



Weymouth leading Le Cirque with assorted socialites



With her mother in 1980

her boyfriend the socialist firebrand was obliged to get out of the backseat, go to the driver's window and ask the servant nicely if he would drive, please. (When gossip hound and conscience-of-the-left Liz Smith saw a picture in *Women's Wear Daily* of the two lovebirds together at a party, she felt it necessary to scribble off a note to Cockburn: "Your

father would turn over in his grave to see you in black tie going to a party at the Bill Paleys.")

Equally provocative and talked-about was Weymouth's relationship with the married George Will. In early 1987 Weymouth and the *Newsweek* columnist were spotted together repeatedly in Washington. At the same time, Will was also seen lunching with Nancy Reagan at various restaurants outside the city, where, many think, the first lady was trying to patch up Will's marriage and steer him away from her friend Kay Graham's excitable daughter.

That summer *The Washingtonian* wrote that Will and Weymouth were indeed having an affair. The magazine also ran a short item saying that Will had found all his office furniture and supplies in a pile in front of his Chevy Chase house with a note saying, "Take it somewhere else, buster." Will—who, like Weymouth, has always denied that the relationship was romantic—threatened to sue *The Washingtonian*. The magazine offered to write a correction if it would be allowed to investigate the matter and interview his friends. Will declined and dropped the subject.



Stooping to comfort Barry Diller and Barbara Walters

**E**ally Graham married Yann Weymouth—perhaps best known today as a chief designer of I. M. Pei's pyramid addition

to the Louvre and as the brother of Talking Heads bassist Tina Weymouth—in 1964, when she was a senior at Radcliffe. She worked briefly as a reporter for *The Boston Globe* until her first daughter was born; six years and another daughter later, the Wey-

mouths divorced. Getting married had been, the young divorcée later commented, "horribly rash."

Before she began writing freelance for *The New York Times Magazine*, *Esquire* and *New York*—for which she covered, among other stories, the Jean Harris trial (Harris was headmistress of the Madeira School, Weymouth's alma mater) and the Claus von Bülow affair—Weymouth had landed her first serious job in publishing, editing the book *Thomas Jefferson: The Man, His World, His Influence* for her old friend George Weidenfeld. She had then gone on to edit a second book, *America in 1876: The Way We Were*, the book party for which was held in the special banquet room of the *Newsweek* building, the Top of the Week—to the chagrin of certain *Newsweek* employees who felt that the event was a misuse of company premises. Just before this party Weymouth appeared on the cover of Andy Warhol's *Interview* magazine, with an accompanying interview conducted by her then-dress designer, the late Halston.

[HALSTON] And the most interesting part [of editing the book]?

[WEYMOUTH] *Oh, I loved doing the chapter on the rich.*

The rich are always interesting.

*Where they went, what kind of dresses they wore, what kind of houses they built—it was very interesting.*

The rich are always the most interesting people, don't you think?

*I think they could be the most interesting people.*

Several gripping minutes later:

[HALSTON] What's your next [book] going to be?

[WEYMOUTH] *I think it's going to be about the rich of America.*

Ah-ha! You see, they are interesting. The current rich?

*All the way from start to finish, I think. We'll see.*

I love that. It will be very interesting.

Two months later *People* maga-



zine asked Weymouth if there were drawbacks to growing up rich. "Yes," she said. "But either you decide you have a problem, or you view your family as a terrific advantage and say, 'Let's go forward.'"

Weymouth, although at times highly critical of her mother and the way that she, the oldest sibling, the shrewd **WHEN A CONVERSATION** child, has been cheated out of the **TURNED TO MICHAEL DUKAKIS,** *Post*, has tried to make the most of her **LALLY BLURTED OUT, "MY GOD,** advantages. She is not uncomfortable using **THAT MAN'S NEVER EVEN** her mother's name or the name of her mother's company **BEEN TO PARIS!"** to satisfy her whims. During the 1980 election campaign a *Newsweek* correspondent found Weymouth sitting in the assigned *Newsweek* seat on the Reagan-campaign plane. The seat was toward the front of the plane, a particularly good spot because its proximity to the Reagan cabin allowed one to see exchanges between Ronald and Nancy that journalists seated farther back would miss. Weymouth and the correspondent introduced themselves. Then the correspondent said, "I think you're sitting in the *Newsweek* seat," the implicit "and you don't work for *Newsweek*" hanging in the air. "Well, *The Washington Post* owns *Newsweek*," Weymouth responded—oddly, given that at the time she didn't work for *The Washington Post* either—"so I'm going to sit in the seat." The correspondent reminded Weymouth that *Newsweek* had actually paid for the seat. "Well, since the *Post* owns *Newsweek*, the *Post* is paying for the seat," Weymouth said. After several more parries, Weymouth's intent became clear: *she was not going to budge*. Exasperated, the correspondent was finally forced to retreat and spend the next several days seated in the rear of the plane.

Weymouth's professional behavior overseas is even worse. She is notorious for treating *Washing-*

*ton Post* and *Newsweek* correspondents abroad as her personal footmen. When one correspondent stationed in Beirut failed to recognize her or to go out of his way to help her, Weymouth told journalists there that she had never been treated so poorly by a *Washington Post* correspondent and that she was going to talk to about him. Even more problematic for correspondents and stringers abroad, however, has been Weymouth's use of her mother's name in order to "big-foot" interviews. By saying she is Katharine Graham's daughter, Weymouth can get foreign leaders to sit down with her.

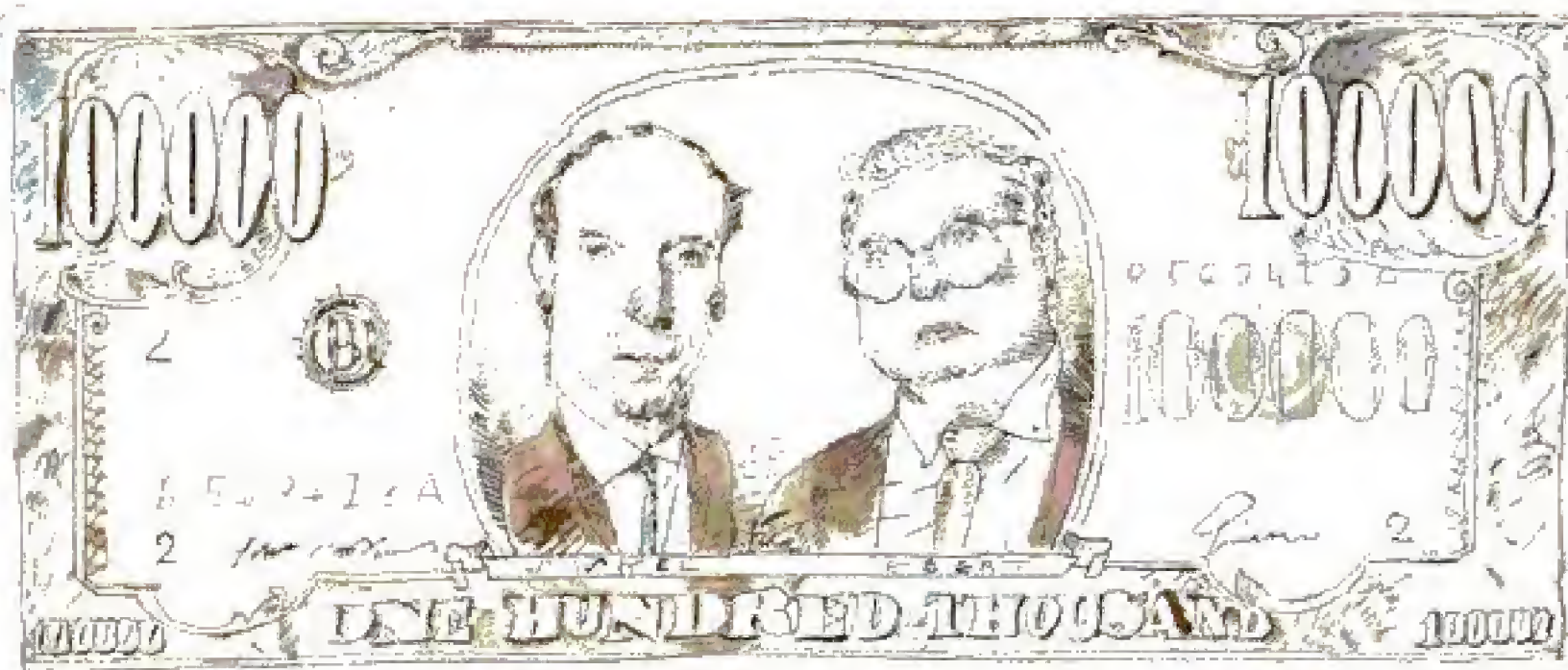
On one occasion, Weymouth and a *Newsweek* correspondent were vying for the chance to interview an especially slippery head of state for the magazine. Not surprisingly, Katharine Graham's daughter booked the man first, and the real *Newsweek* reporter was shut out. Of course, this kind of thing can happen whenever a top editor of a news organization flies in to do an interview, but Weymouth is viewed as a particularly egregious offender, chiefly because she was using her dynastic clout for a decade before she started writing for the *Post*. Such was the case in 1985 when Weymouth stormed through Bonn, landing interviews not only with Helmut Kohl, who'd given just two interviews to date while in office, but also with all but one of the members of his Cabinet whom she had asked to see. Another time, Weymouth's use of connections—not her mother, but Said and other powerful friends in New York—caved in on itself. During the final days of the Israeli siege of Beirut in 1982, Weymouth secured an interview with Yasir Arafat—a real journalistic coup given that the PLO leader was lying low. At that point, however, Weymouth was

writing for *Parade*, a magazine with a six-week lead time, and thus the topicality of the events rendered the interview all but useless.

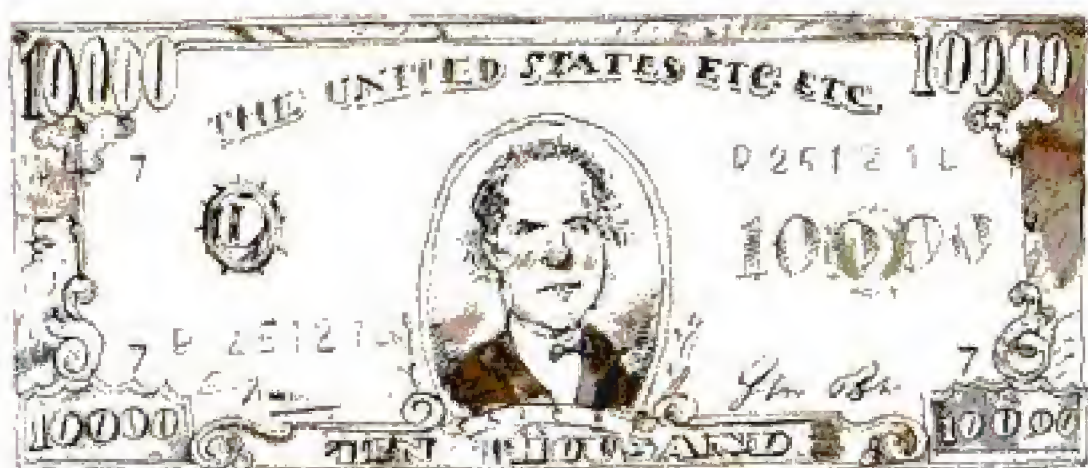
**B**efore signing on with the *Post* three and a half years ago, Weymouth caught the attention of haute Washington by talking first to Arnaud de Borchgrave, the editor of the *Post*'s competitor, the right-wing *Washington Times*. Many in Washington interpreted the meetings between the two as an attempt by De Borchgrave to take revenge upon the *Post* and possibly even Kay Graham (who had fired De Borchgrave from *Newsweek* several years earlier) and as Weymouth's endeavor to embarrass her mother into hiring her. Whatever the ulterior reasons for the meetings, De Borchgrave—who claims that the sort of articles Weymouth would have been writing for him were "the old Arnaud de Borchgrave-type pieces, like the ones I used to do for *Newsweek*; you know, big exclusives with very important people"—is sorry it didn't work out. "Every single one of her pieces would have been on the front page in my paper," he says. "They're fabulous pieces. She's got great connections, [so] she can report her stories well."

So it is clear that Weymouth *does* have fans. And she does have security—in addition to her Washington Post Company holdings and inheritance, her salary at the *Post* is said to be \$75,000 a year. And she does have a future: she has told friends in New York that her brother Donald has assured her that when *Post* editor Ben Bradlee officially retires, the *Post* will become much more conservative. But it will still be a paper run by her little brother, not by her, and that fact is still likely to make Lally Weymouth peevisish. ☛

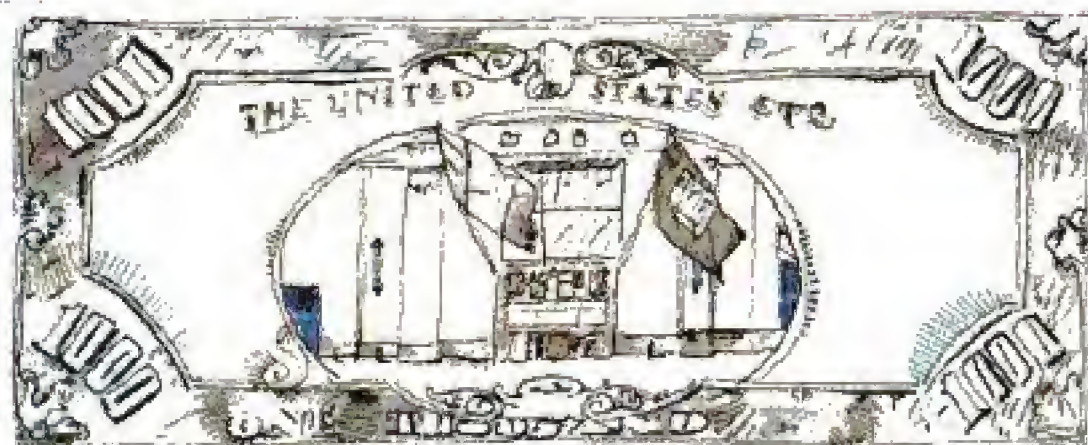




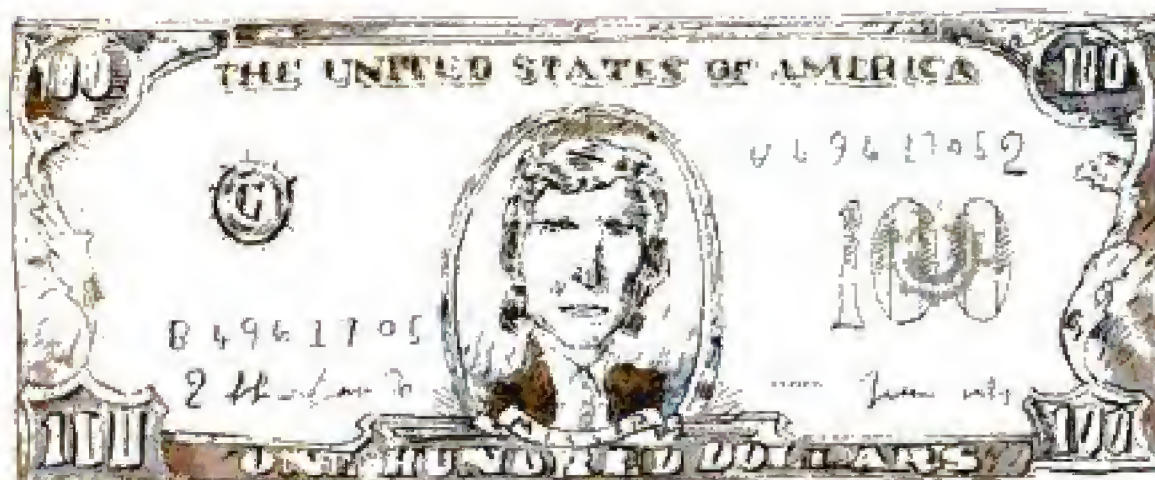
The Siskel & Ebert \$100,000 Bill



Frank Rich



The New York Times Book Review



Bryan Miller



Joel Siegel



Carl Greene



Peter Travers



Gene Shalit



Gary Franklin



Richard Schickel



Pauline Kael



Vincent Canby



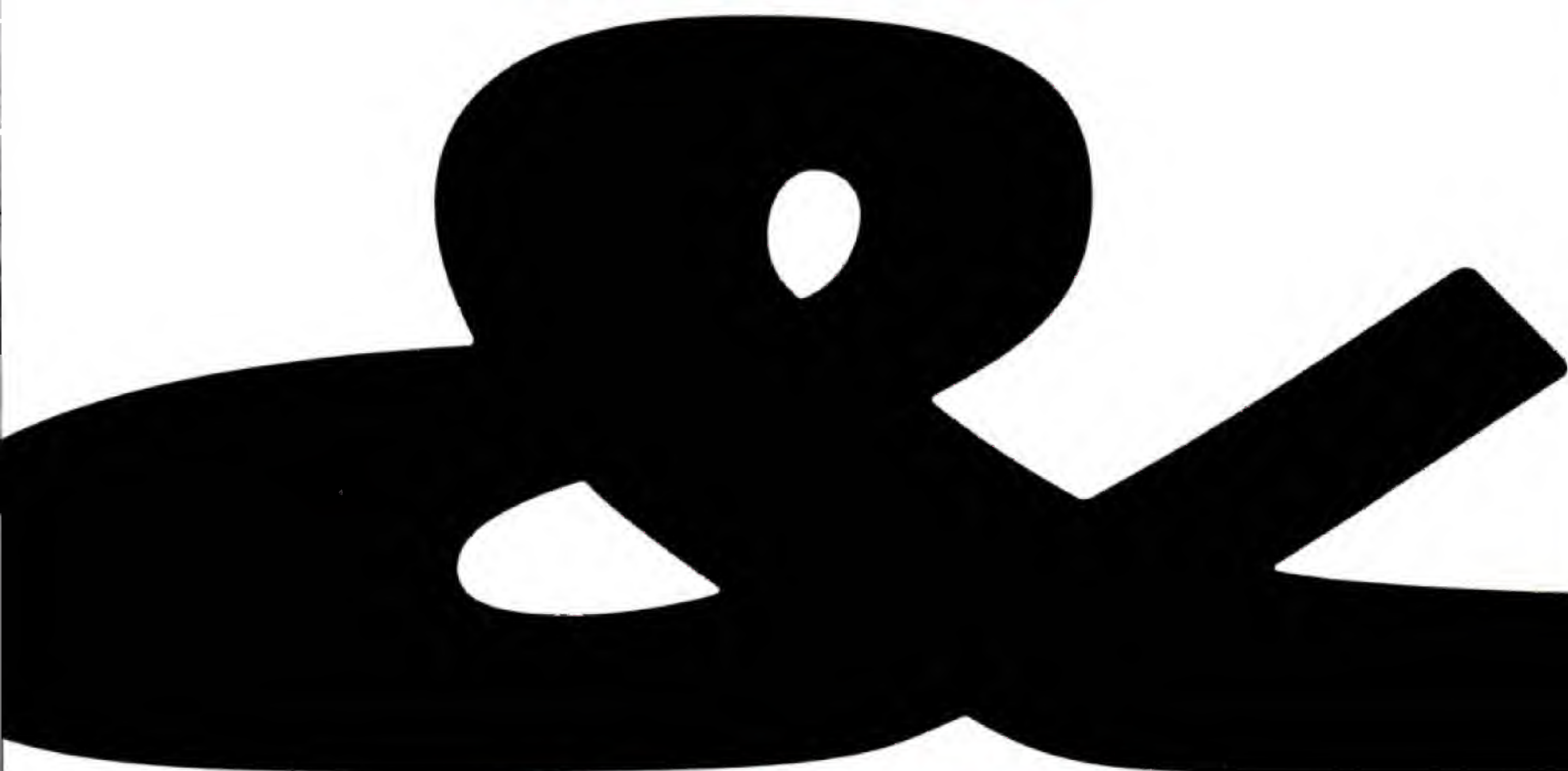
We all know that critics are powerful. How often we allow their opinions to overrule our modest judgments, as though they were gods and we their mindless instruments! "Honey, I know we've hated every Bill Murray picture ever made, but Janet Maslin said *Scrooged* was *hilarious*." "Sweetie, I know you've never understood a moment of the 18 productions we've seen at La Mama, but Mel Gussow likes what this troupe of Bulgarian nihilists is putting on down there, and I got tickets."

"Look, darling, Michiko Kakutani thinks this new David Leavitt novel is even more random and uneventful than his last. *Let's get it!*" But a question persists—just how much is this power to sway minds really worth in dollars and cents?

EDDIE STERN wades through the  
and discloses the link between

# THE CRITICS

data, speculates shrewdly



# THE CASHBOX

**WHAT THE OPINIONS OF A FEW QUASI-INTELLECTUALS MEAN TO  
THE INCOMES OF AMERICA'S CULTURAL ELITE**

**I**t was a hot summer day, steaming, broiling, but not so fierce as to keep most of the members of the cast of *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* from assembling in front of the offices of The New York Times. In costume, they marched and chanted, "Get Rich! Get Rich! Get Rich!" protesting the lousy review the paper's chief theater critic had given their production. From the third floor, Frank Rich looked down, unmoved. *S* It was a seasonable day in September when Bryan Miller, restaurant reviewer for the Times, arrived at Bellini, Harry Cipriani's cosmopolitan restaurant. A manager recognized him and, mindful of the negative review Miller had written about another Cipriani establishment, refused to serve him. A few weeks later Miller returned, sporting a beard. He dined incognito, and if his comments in the Times were any indication, he had an awful time. A furious Cipriani responded to the write-up with an ad in the Times accusing Miller of acting on behalf of a cabal of rival restaurateurs who were out to ruin him.





**A Spotter's Guide, Part 1**  
(from top) Industry dictator Frank Rich; West Coast power Sheila Benson; Dick Clark's former PR man Gene Shalit; professional eater Bryan Miller (in 1974 yearbook photo); Cathy Monnett, the Butcher of Palo Verde

*It was just another slow evening at the only cinema in Blythe, California (population 8,600). Cathy Monnett, then the movie critic for The Palo Verde Valley Times, bought her ticket at the box office and settled into a seat. But before the film started rolling, the theater's manager strode down the aisle and handed her back her money. Your reviews are too negative, he said. They hurt business. Please leave.*

*How frail their egos are!* we thought to ourselves. *What moved people like Cipriani or the Seven Brides cast to make such spectacles of themselves over a little bit of criticism?* Then we thought again. After all, the reviews had cost them money—money they might have made many times over had the reviews been favorable, money that would have been spent and respent, accelerating through the economy until it finally trickled down and solved the homeless crisis. But none of this happened, all because some critic didn't like a movie or show or book or piece of veal. And although the critics ritually deny their power—see Vincent Canby's article about *Cutter's Way* ("I didn't kill it, the distributors [did]"), or Frank Rich's letter to David Hare on the subject of *The Secret Rapture* ("The *Times* didn't close your show, the producers [did]"), or, more convincing, Anatole Broyard's piece on book reviews ("I doubt my spluttering praise helped sales")—it became clear that critics constitute an underappreciated economic force. A force that we call the Reviewer Factor.

We wanted to calculate the value of the Reviewer Factor. Some of the smartest people in the culture and entertainment businesses said we'd never be able to quantify even approximately the financial impact of a critic's review. They may well have been right, but where was their pioneer spirit? Some people are apparently afraid of making sweeping generalizations, of ignoring mitigating factors, of placing a lot of stock in some fairly iffy figures, all to come up with a rough gauge of a critic's bottom-line clout. But not us.

#### At the Movies: Who's Most Powerful?

Unlike theater, restaurant, literary and architecture criticism—the fields overwhelmingly dominated at any moment by the reviewers in the employ of *The New York Times*—movie criticism is so widely practiced that it is nearly a folk art. Because there are so many demonstrably influential movie reviewers, our first task was to crown the most important critic. So we developed a formula.

Movie reviewers, we figured, can exercise power in either of two basic ways: (1) they can help filmmakers, distributors and theater owners make money by raving

about a film; or (2) they can make the same people lose money by panning it. Additionally, their reviews can be excerpted in advertisements; presumably, the more frequently a critic's name appears in ads, the more important he or she is. Finally, we reasoned that a review in a medium with a large readership or viewership is more important than a review that is less widely read. But this measure of relative clout surely doesn't operate in a simple, proportional way—Roger Ebert is not 20 times as important as Pauline Kael, even though he has more than 20 million viewers and readers vs. Kael's 600,000 or so readers. So instead of basing our calculations on raw circulation or viewership numbers, we used the logarithms of these numbers in order to reduce the vast differences between them while keeping their relative proportions. We combined these factors into a formula:

$$\text{PICK POWER} + \text{PAN POWER} + \text{QUOTABILITY} \\ \times \text{LOG OF CIRCULATION} = \text{POWER QUOTIENT}$$

Weeding out the obviously powerless critics, we wound up with 12 contenders: Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert, the omnipresent newspaper and television reviewers; Gene Shalit of NBC's *Today* and Joel Siegel of ABC's *Good Morning America*; Vincent Canby of *The New York Times* and Sheila Benson of the *Los Angeles Times*; David Ansen of *Newsweek* and *Time*'s two Richards—Corliss and Schickel; Pauline Kael of *The New Yorker*; blurbmeister Peter Travers of *Rolling Stone*; and Gary Franklin of KABC-TV in Los Angeles, critic to the industry.

We chose ten recent movies that appeared to be profitable and subtracted their budgets from their rental revenues (the fees theaters pay distributors to rent the film) to arrive at a rough measure of their profits. We then compared our reviewers' opinions on each of these films, distributing a movie's profits equally among the critics who recommended it. For example, *Batman's* \$121 million (as of April) in profits was parceled out among the seven critics from our list who gave the film positive notices (see Chart A). Siegel's uncanny knack for finding something positive to say about everything he sees won him this category. Shalit showed a commensurate bounty of enthusiasm but suffered from having reviewed only seven of the ten movies in our sample.

We used a similar method to calculate whose pan was deadliest, compiling a list of big-budget commercial failures and allocating each film's losses equally among those who panned it (see Chart B). The most powerful negative reviewers are Siskel and Ebert. Curiously, the critics who were fussiest about many of the commercially successful movies consistently *liked* movies that lost money. Vincent Canby, for example, proved himself to be a relentlessly anticommercial critic, picking *Empire of the Sun*, *Casualties of War* and *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (combined losses: \$55 million). Richard Corliss recommended two of these movies as well as *In Country* and *Ironweed* (combined losses: \$77 million).



# CHART A

Movie	Profits	Ansen	Benson	Canby	Corliss	Ebert	Franklin	Kael	Schickel	Shalit	Siegel	Siskel	Travers
<i>Batman</i>	\$121 million	—	pan	pick	pan	pan	pick	pick	—	pick	pick	pick	pick
<i>Three Men and a Baby</i>	\$76 million	pick	—	—	pan	pick	pan	—	—	—	pick	pick	pick
<i>Fatal Attraction</i>	\$56 million	pan	—	—	—	pan	pick	pick	pick	pick	pick	pick	pick
<i>Lethal Weapon II</i>	\$60 million	pick	—	—	pan	pick	pan	—	—	pick	pick	pan	pick
<i>Coming to America</i>	\$37 million	pick	pan	pan	—	pan	pan	—	pan	—	pick	pick	pick
<i>Rain Man</i>	\$62 million	pick	pick	pick	—	pick	pick	pick	pan	pick	pick	pick	pick
<i>Big</i>	\$34 million	pick	—	—	—	pick	pick	pick	—	pick	pick	pick	pick
<i>Twins</i>	\$43 million	pick	—	pan	—	pick	pick	—	pick	pick	pick	pick	pan
<i>Who Framed Roger Rabbit</i>	\$25 million	pick	pick	pick	pan	pick	pick	—	—	pick	pick	pick	pick
<i>Do the Right Thing</i>	\$7 million	pick	pick	pick	pan	pick	pick	—	—	—	pick	pick	pick
Totals (in millions)	\$521	\$56	\$10	\$27	0	\$47	\$45	\$35	\$14	\$62	\$81	\$69	\$75
(— = did not review)													

# CHART B

Movie	Losses	Ansen	Benson	Canby	Corliss	Ebert	Franklin	Kael	Schickel	Shalit	Siegel	Siskel	Travers
<i>Ishtar</i>	\$37 million	pick	—	—	—	pan	pan	pan	pick	pan	pan	pan	pan
<i>Rambo III</i>	\$30 million	pan	pan	—	—	pan	pan	—	pan	—	pick	pan	pan
<i>Empire of the Sun</i>	\$28 million	pick	pan	pick	pick	pan	pan	pan	—	pick	pick	pan	pick
<i>Old Gringo</i>	\$23 million	—	pick	—	—	pan	pan	—	—	—	pan	pan	pan
<i>Ironweed</i>	\$24 million	pick	pick	—	pick	pick	pick	pan	—	pan	pick	pan	pick
<i>Casualties of War</i>	\$14 million	pick	—	pick	—	pick	pick	pick	pan	—	pick	pick	pick
<i>Tucker: The Man and His Dream</i>	\$13 million	pick	pick	—	—	pan	pick	—	pick	—	—	pan	pick
<i>The Unbearable Lightness of Being</i>	\$13 million	pick	pan	pick	pick	pick	pick	pick	—	pick	pick	pick	pick
<i>The Good Mother</i>	\$12 million	pick	pan	—	—	pan	pick	pan	pan	—	pick	pick	pick
<i>In Country</i>	\$12 million	pan	—	—	pick	pick	pick	—	—	—	pick	pick	pick
Totals (in millions)	\$206	\$17	\$22	0	0	\$30	\$20	\$22	\$22	\$13	\$10	\$35	\$15

Next we calculated who was quoted most frequently in movie advertisements, by tabulating the number of times each critic's name was printed in three randomly chosen editions of the Sunday *New York Times* and the Sunday *Los Angeles Times*.

Ebert . . . . . 45	Franklin . . . 18	Shalit . . . . . 13
Siskel . . . . . 36	Ansen . . . . . 17	Corliss . . . . . 9
Siegel . . . . . 31	Canby . . . . . 14	Schickel . . . . 7
Travers . . . . . 19	Benson . . . . 13	Kael . . . . . 2

Siskel and Ebert won this category on a technicality: occasionally they were quoted twice within the same advertisement—together as Siskel & Ebert ("Two enthusiastic thumbs up!") and then separately ("Delight for everyone!" Roger Ebert, *Chicago Sun-Times*). Joel Siegel, who told us that he is "flattered to be quoted," took third. Sadly, Pauline Kael, a woman who once upon a time dispensed advertisement-ready blurb copy for movies she had not even reviewed, trailed the pack. Kael, in fact, scored poorly in all categories. However,



in deference to her strong influence at one time or another over several protégés ("Paulettes") whose opinions she has supposedly swayed, including David Denby, David Edelstein, Hal Hinson, Stephen Schiff and Michael Sragow, we awarded her a special cult bonus that tripled her relatively small circulation figure. We then worked the data through the formula, to derive each reviewer's Power Quotient:

Siskel . . . 1,014.6	Shalit . . . 580.9	Schickel . . . 285.6
Ebert . . . 901.4	Travers . . . 576.5	Benson . . . 272.1
Siegel . . . 825.9	Franklin . . . 475.3	Canby . . . 267.1
Ansen . . . 586.5	Kael . . . 340.9	Corliss . . . 59.8

Based on his consistently high rank in the three categories, Siskel is, in 1990, America's Most Powerful Movie Reviewer. Not surprisingly, this decision was challenged by Ebert, the runner-up. "How could he have possibly edged me out?" whined Ebert when we called to congratulate him on his second-place finish. "I demand a recount.... Did you know that I'm in 190 papers and he's in 16? That I'm on the number-one-rated network station in Chicago and he's on number three? I'm in the [New York] *Daily News* and he isn't—that's another million every day. If you add up the *Sun-Times* and the *Daily News*, that's certainly more than the *Chicago Tribune*. [Also], you've added the *Chicago Tribune's* circulation without acknowledging the fact that he doesn't write reviews for them.... He writes Siskel's Flicks Picks [short, one-paragraph items], so I would question whether he should get full credit for the *Tribune* at all, since they have another reviewer doing full-length reviews. You have to throw in my *book* too." We were all set to convene a judge's committee to rule on Ebert's claim when we heard from Siskel, who told us that in fact his reviews appeared in 75 papers, not 16, as Ebert had claimed. Tired of the squabbling, we decided against hearing Ebert's appeal. Ebert conceded graciously, saying, "It doesn't matter to me so much that he's ahead of me as long as you mention that it's because he liked *Fatal Attraction* and *I didn't*."

Now that we know who the most powerful critics are, let's figure out how valuable they are. The total annual movie box-office gross in America is approximately \$5-billion. Let's say these dozen critics drive 5 percent of that amount, or \$250 million. By factoring in the Power Quotient, we calculate that Siskel and Ebert together are responsible for about 31 percent of that amount, or \$77.5 million.

### On Broadway: The Rich Effect

Surely Frank Rich, the chief drama critic of *The New York Times*, had no idea of the ruckus he would cause last winter when he chose the words "drab...colorless...leaden...humorless...baffling" to describe the Broadway production of a play he had admired when he saw it in London. Soon after this pan, *The Secret Rapture* closed. Traditionally Rich's victims roll over and die without much carping, but this time David Hare, the play's author and director as well as the paramour of its

# THE REVENGE OF THE BUTCHER

A SPY SYMPOSIUM ON THE BRIEF, UNFORTUNATELY  
THE MOST POWERFUL THEATER CRITIC IN

by Randall Short

*Hey! New York! You just wait! I'm gonna be the biggest thing that ever hit this town! You just wait, New York!* Such, we conjecture, was Frank Rich's interior monologue when he, like thousands of other stagestruck kids, rolled into the city in 1973 and stood gazing up at the neon canyons of Broadway, stars in his eyes, a fire in his heart.

But anyone who has seen firsthand the cavalier disdain with which the Great White Way chews up young innocents knows that the lot of the actor-to-be is not an easy one. To pay the bills, Rich took work as a film critic for the *New York Post* and then *Time*, and was forced daily to watch successful young actors plying their trade on the other side of the camera.

Then, out of nowhere, came *the break*. In 1979 director Rob Cohen, Rich's Harvard classmate and friend, was casting *A Small Circle of Friends*, a film that actually may not be the worst movie ever made about adolescent passions during the Vietnam War. Cohen needed someone to play the small but significant part of an editor at *The Harvard Crimson*—a position, as it happened, that Rich had held during the period in question.

As Cohen planned it, an early scene would depict a stiff-necked editor refusing freshman journalist Leo (Brad Davis) a place on the staid *Crimson*. Two years later, though, rebellion would have found its way to Harvard. Leo, now president of the *Crimson*, would be shown dealing with a second editor, who would visually reflect the change. Someone looser, more casual, funkier. Would Rich be interested in playing him?

*Hey! New York! Hey...*

And there the story comes to an odd, abortive halt. By what cruel trick did *A Small Circle of Friends* prove to be the launching pad to stardom for a panoply of then-unknown performers—Shelley (*Cheers*) Long, Daniel (*Diner*) Stern and Doug (*The People's Court*) Llewellyn—while Rich was forced to find yet another day job? It could be argued that the brevity of his screen time precluded his making a strong impression, but Stern's and Llewellyn's scenes are no longer than Rich's. Besides, when Marilyn Monroe made what was essentially *her* film debut in *Love Happy*—in a scene of *almost precisely the same duration*—phones were instantly ringing off the hook at Republic, all of Hollywood screaming, "Who's the blond?"

This did not happen to Frank Rich.

Why not? We assembled a panel of Rich's fellow theatrical professionals—a famous **Actor**, a well-known **Playwright** and a highly regarded **Director**, all successful veterans of Broadway—to critique his 1980 film performance, with the aim of providing guidance for the once-and-future thespian at this foundering stage of his career. (In a moving display of show business heart, all selflessly requested anonymity so that the focus could remain on Frank—*his* needs, *his* choices, *his* goals.)

### THE SCENE

*Tracking shot pulls back on EDITOR NO. 2 (Rich) as he strides purposefully down a corridor, various papers in hand. Swerving to the left, he opens a door marked PRESIDENT and continues inside, where LEO (Brad Davis) is typing away.*

EDITOR NO. 2: Leo, Leo—you better come look at these layouts.

*(They walk briskly to the outside area, now seen to be the Crimson offices. EDITOR NO. 2 spreads the papers on a table and leans over them, gesticulating.)*

EDITOR NO. 2: This whole thing is messed up. Look, that cut didn't come in.... This piece just doesn't work; we're gonna have to replace it with something else.... And this....

*(As he speaks we see, in the background, two excited STUDENTS burst through a door at the end of a long hallway. They run frantically to where LEO and EDITOR*



# RED OF BROADWAY

INATE ACTING CAREER OF  
AMERICA



NO. 2 are standing.

STUDENTS (*ad lib*): Come on! Out there! Holy! Trouble! All hell! Jesus!  
(LEO follows them. EDITOR NO. 2 stays put. A riot protesting the war ensues.)

## INITIAL IMPRESSIONS

**Actor:** "It's a one-note performance, whiny and complaining. It's very heavy-handed, almost leaden."

**Director:** "First of all, his intention isn't clear."

**Playwright:** "Where the hell was his agent during all this, for Chrissake?"

## AN ACTOR PREPARES

Much of the blame for what our panel unanimously called the scene's lack of "spontaneity" was attributed to "tight, blocky" movement resulting from the actor's imperfect command of his physical instrument. (Had Frank warmed up, they wondered, before hitting his mark?) "It seems to be centered very awkwardly and haphazardly," observed the **Actor**. "He leads with the front of his stomach. A lot of body work is needed to loosen the shoulders and pelvis area so that he can play the moment. And he's holding himself away from the table at a very peculiar, unnatural angle."

The **Director** focused on Frank's relationship to the camera, noting his elaborate efforts to avoid looking into the lens and the distracting "rocking around in the frame" effect as he makes his crosses.

"Vocally, it's pitched in a funny and rather unpleasant register. A lot of voice work [would be necessary to] get that whining tone out and open up his vowels," the **Actor** said. "Unclench the jaws, get it out of the nose, drop down to the chest," added the **Director**.

The **Director** felt that an incipient bald spot atop bouffant bangs made Frank look too "mature" for the role. The **Actor** admitted having a "hard time getting past the haircut." The **Playwright** refused to believe, despite our assurances, that Frank was not wearing a wig.

## BUILDING A CHARACTER

"Look at his entrance!" cried the **Director**. "There's something in his mind, something he's urgently after, but his objective isn't clear."

Frank's whine, irritating enough in itself, also was felt to contribute to creating an impression of "arrogance" incompatible with his position on the staff. Observed the **Actor**, "Frank is playing it as if he's the person in authority, even though Leo is clearly above him."

## CREATING A ROLE

*Too general, too general, too general:* the epithet dreaded by every Method-trained actor recurred like a litany as the panel discussed Frank's failure to make "specific choices." Particularly distressing in this regard was the floppy, imprecise scrabbling of his fingers as he points out supposed problems with the "layouts." "Frank needs to play truthfully the situation he's been given to work with rather than just follow the blocking and try to hit one general quality," said the **Actor**. "It's not an impossible role. But Frank doesn't discover Leo in the room. He might be there; he might not. There's nothing to show us what he's expecting. When people come into a room, there's always a beat while they establish their presence before going on to the next objective. Not here."

It was generally agreed that the already tenuous logic of the performance disintegrates completely when Frank moves to the outside work area. The **Actor** remarked, "He says, 'You'd better come look at these lay-

outs,' but if it's so urgent, and he's got them in his hand, why don't they look at them right there at the desk instead of moving outside to the office? The mood is contradicted. You don't show something to somebody and then take them into another room to show it to them again."

A major complaint concerned Frank's seemingly endless wait for a direct visual cue before responding to the commotion in the hallway. "Why doesn't he hear them when they're coming in?" said the **Actor**. "Look at Leo: he turns around long before Frank does."

Furthermore, the **Actor** was unable to understand why "nothing physical happens except for the turn of the head when the guys come in through the door. Leo tenses up to show his concern. But Frank's body doesn't move at all after he gets to the table."

At this point the **Playwright**, increasingly restive, entered a strong dissent on Frank's behalf. "Look at the way the director has positioned him. The problem is that the director just doesn't give a shit about him. He's thrown him away. He's given him the least attractive camera angle possible — especially with the weight problem, which emphasizes his stomach."

## OFF THE SET: FACTORS BEYOND FRANK'S CONTROL

After several viewings the **Playwright** became incensed by an impression of behind-the-scenes treachery. "Frank got a very raw deal. That director wasn't his friend. He set out to embarrass that kid, it's clear. He didn't have a prayer. With a better costumer and wigmaker, maybe he could have done better. I think it's all terribly unfair. I think he would do well to re-examine his past relationship with this guy [Cohen]. I don't wonder that Frank is embittered and sour [today]. On some level he's bound to know that he got a raw deal."

This opinion was not shared by the other two panelists.

## THE FUTURE

Movement classes, voice classes, a couple of seasons in stock (**Director**: "Some of the Shakespeare clowns, maybe"), classes with certain body-work-based European directors, the comprehensive course at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts — all were recommended to Frank as starting points for serious catch-up work. The **Director**, in particular, felt that Frank's appearance in *A Small Circle* told the all-too-common story of a young actor's overhasty film debut. Even so, he was surprisingly sanguine about Frank's prospects: "Frank could turn out to be one of those actors who, after a few false starts, ultimately grow into a well-defined persona. I wouldn't call him a juvenile, though; the time for that is already past in this movie. He's going to be character rather than lead. A James Coco, a preppy Dom DeLuise, a John Goodman look."

The **Playwright's** outlook was grimmer: "The kid was brought to the set, he was given a lousy costume, the makeup was a killer, the wig was a disaster. Immense potential, but too much water may have passed under the bridge at this point."

Is it too late? We say no. The annals of acting are full of inspirational stories about performers who, plugging away after a false start through years of despair, have risen phoenixlike from the ashes. And if, say, plans should shortly be announced for *The New My Three Sons: 25 Years Later*, and if, say, the producers are forced by contract disputes with the original cast to begin a nationwide search for the mature Chip... Hold on to your dream, Frank. The brass ring is still out there. Grab it. *Hold on.* ☺





## NOTHING ATTRACTS LIKE THE IMP



CORIANDER SEEDS FROM MOROCCO



ANGELICA ROOT FROM SAXONY



JUNIPER BERRIES FROM ITALY



CASSIA BARK FROM INDOCHINA

star, fired off a testy letter accusing Rich of being "gratuitously abusive" of his power, which the outspoken socialist playwright maintained was "as bad as anything in Soviet Russia."

In an episode that has now become theater lore, Hare's letter prompted an onslaught of commentary about Rich's power. Soon *Variety*, the *Daily News*, *The Village Voice*, *The New York Observer* and *The Wall Street Journal* were weighing in with discourses on the mayhem that Frank Rich had wreaked on Broadway.

Notably, no one wrote a word about the many other critics who had panned the play. This is not surprising. Theater publicists agree: the other reviewers are "barely worth a ticket," as one flack put it. Indeed, Rich wouldn't be worth a ticket either were he working anywhere but at the *Times*. Consider the careers of Rich and his colleague Clive Barnes. Back when Rich was a mere pup reviewing for *The Harvard Crimson*, Barnes was the *Times* theater critic and a colossus. But then Barnes left for a job at the *Post*. Today Rich is the most powerful Broadway critic, and Barnes is a virtual nonentity in box office terms.

Need harder evidence? In the spring of 1987, Barnes liked *Sleight of Hand*; Rich described it as variously "rambling and numbing...frail...tedious." The play closed after nine performances. The next season, Barnes liked *Carrie*, which Rich described as "just a

typical musical-theater botch." The show closed after five performances and lost about \$7-million for its investors. On the other hand, Rich liked *Gypsy*, *Orpheus Descending* and *City of Angels*, and each became a hit. Occasionally a play that Rich praises, such as Jules Feiffer's *Grownups* (1981), can't find an audience, and occasionally he pans a corny, audience-pleasing winner such as *I'm Not Rappaport* or *42nd Street*, but for the most part Frank Rich is on the money—or rather, *is* the money.

So how much is Broadway's mightiest critic worth? We figured that one way to calculate Rich's clout would be to measure the immediate effect of his reviews. To do that, we took attendance figures for a show's preview performances one week prior to its opening and for the first two weeks afterward. We assumed that the audience attending previews is made up largely of theatergoers attracted to the show by its theme or stars or playwright. We further assumed that the audience that attended (or chose not to attend) shows during the week or two after Rich's review would consist of people whose theatergoing decisions were inordinately influenced by the *Times*. By subtracting the preview audience from the post-opening audience and then multiplying that figure by the price of a seat, you get the Rich Effect (see Chart C).

The total Rich Effect on the four productions that were reviewed positively is \$325,840, an average of





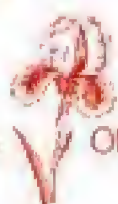
## PORTED TASTE OF BOMBAY GIN.



ALMONDS FROM INDOCHINA



LEMON PEEL FROM SPAIN

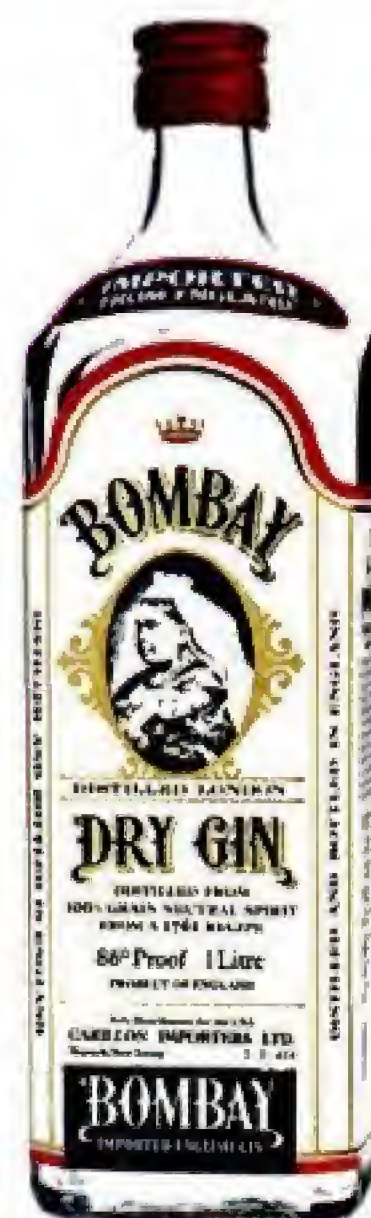


ORRIS (IRIS ROOT) FROM ITALY



LICORICE FROM INDOCHINA

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\$81,460 per production. The total Rich Effect on the five productions that were reviewed negatively is \$460,800, an average of \$92,160 per production. Of course, these numbers are only the tip of the iceberg. A hit show will run for months, if not years. There will be touring companies, cast albums, sweatshirts, tote bags, the possibility of endless revivals and Hollywood deals. On the other hand, a pan usually means closing, and writing off the total investment, which on average means the loss, on Broadway, of \$1 million for a drama and \$6 million for a musical. Between October 1988 and October '89, when Rich reviewed ten Broadway productions positively and ten negatively, Rich cost theatrical investors approximately \$20 million.

### At the Table: The Miller Effect

"The owners of Patsy's," read an Editor's Note in the *Times* last May, "point out several inaccuracies, including a reference to wallpaper (it is a mural), the colors of the upstairs dining room (pink and red), and the type of mirrors (plain, not speckled)... The restaurant reports that it does not serve stuffed peppers or potato fritters, as the review stated, that its clams casino do not contain bread crumbs, and that it does not serve swordfish in white wine and garlic."

The offending review, which had been written by Bryan Miller, appeared on a Friday—Good Friday. Two days later, on Easter Sunday, Patsy's served 70 dinners,

says co-owner Joe Scognamillo, roughly 300 fewer than the restaurant had the previous Easter. His relative loss that day thus amounted to \$12,600, and over the following few months 30 percent of his business evaporated, a loss in excess of \$200,000. In other words, the fate of Patsy's and thousands of other New York restaurants lies in the hands of Bryan Miller, a critic who somehow evaluated the potato fritters of a restaurant that didn't serve any.

In order to calculate the Bryan Miller Effect, we needed a formula. What we came up with resembles the formula we used to measure the Rich Effect: take the change in the number of meals served after a review and multiply that number by the cost of an average meal. Unfortunately, no one monitors the number of meals served in the city's restaurants, so we were obliged to use highly reliable anecdotal evidence. One story, told to us by a Manhattan restaurateur who had recently gone out of business, provides a striking example of Miller's economic significance. Liz Logan of *7 Days*, Gael Greene of *New York* and Mimi Sheraton in her newsletter had all raved about this man's small, expensive three-year-old Upper East Side restaurant. The place was just beginning to develop a following when Miller demoted it from two *Times* stars, which he had given it shortly after it opened in 1986, to one. The owner estimates that business immediately dropped by at least 25 diners a night—roughly half his business. At



# CHART C

Production	Rich's Reaction	Seats Occupied Before Review	Seats Occupied After Review	Maximum Ticket Price	Rich Effect
<i>Artist Descending a Staircase</i> (Helen Hayes Theatre, 499 seats)	pick	304	374	\$37.50	\$42,000
<i>City of Angels</i> (Virginia Theater, 1,250 seats)	pick	713	863	\$55	\$132,000
<i>Gypsy</i> (St. James Theatre, 1,617 seats)	pick	1,423	1,528	\$50	\$84,000
<i>Sweeney Todd</i> (Circle in the Square Theatre, 590 seats)	pick	366	472	\$40	\$67,840
<i>Dangerous Games</i> (Nederlander Theatre, 1,160 seats)	pan	638	557	\$45	– \$11,000
<i>Sid Caesar &amp; Company: Does Anybody Know What I'm Talking About?</i> (Golden Theatre, 805 seats)	pan	203	203	\$40	0
<i>Mastergate</i> (Criterion Center Stage Right, 499 seats)	relative pan	384	314	\$32.50	– \$36,400
<i>Meet Me in St. Louis</i> (Gershwin Theatre, 1,909 seats)	pan	1,565	1,145	\$50	– \$336,000
<i>The Secret Rapture</i> (Barrymore Theatre, 1,096 seats)	pan	614	438	\$40	– \$77,400

# CHART D

Book	Author	Reviews	Number of Copies Sold in Hardcover	Price	Gross Difference in Dollars
<i>Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All</i>	First novelist Allan Gurganus	Sunday Times Book Review front-page rave	150,000	\$21.95	\$2,654,100 for Gurganus and his publishers
<i>The Power of One</i>	Australian novelist Bryce Courtney	Sunday Times Book Review Briefly Noted page-12 pick	32,000	\$18.95	
<i>My Turn: The Memoirs of Nancy Reagan</i>	Late-1980s-model-Lady-Macbeth Nancy Reagan	Sunday Times Book Review front-page essay and page-9 pan	436,478	\$21.95	\$7,585,692 for Nancy and her publishers
<i>First Father, First Daughter</i>	Late-1980s-model-Goneril Maureen Reagan	Sunday Times Book Review page-8 pan	fewer than 100,000	\$19.95	
<i>From Beirut to Jerusalem</i>	New York Times correspondent Thomas Friedman	Sunday Times Book Review front-page rave	100,000	\$22.95	\$1,916,000 for Friedman and his publishers
<i>Beirut Outtakes: A TV Correspondent's Portrait of America's Encounter With Terror</i>	CBS correspondent Larry Pintak	Sunday Times Book Review page-6 pick	fewer than 20,000	\$18.95	
<i>Man of the House: The Life and Political Memoirs of Speaker Tip O'Neill</i>	Tip O'Neill	Sunday Times Book Review front-page pick	484,000	\$19.95	\$3,070,800 for O'Neill and his publishers
<i>For the Record: From Wall Street to Washington</i>	Donald Regan	Sunday Times Book Review page-8 pick	300,000	\$21.95	



an estimated cost of \$75 dollars a meal, the review packed a Miller Effect of about \$12,000 for that single week. And according to the restaurateur, without three stars from Miller a restaurant as costly as his cannot survive. Shortly after the Miller review was published, that establishment closed its doors. The losses were in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Of course, not all Miller reviewees turn out the poorer for the experience. One happy owner of a small, now-famous French restaurant had been feeding 90 people a night before receiving three stars from Miller in June 1985. During the following month 135 people per night put on the nose bag at his place. At \$56 a head, the Miller Effect amounted to a \$70,560 windfall, not including the residual income that any three-star restaurateur can expect. "Three stars from the *Times*," he said, chuckling, "is like a gift from God."

As it turned out, this restaurant had also been praised by Gael Greene. The Greene Effect, the owner maintained, amounted to "more like a weeklong 20 percent buzz," worth in his case about \$7,056—rather less than a \$70,500 gift from the god of West 43rd Street. In fact, the brief mentions Miller awards inexpensive neighborhood joints in his *Diner's Journal* are worth almost as much as a full-length Greene review. One of the Manhattan Chili Co.'s former co-owners claims that a short mention from Miller tripled his business for a weekend. With 50 people spending approximately \$17 per seating, this meant at least an extra \$7,000.

Clearly Miller's favor is valuable, so much so that it would behoove a restaurateur to contort himself to bask in it. One guide to Miller's tastes and habits is Bruce Logan, the publisher of *The West Side TV Shopper*, who has studied every review Miller has written since starting at the *Times* in 1984. According to Logan's analysis, a restaurateur eager to please Miller would be well advised to brush up on recipes for chateaubriand and sauce béarnaise and shelve the pasta. Of all the restaurants that Miller has awarded three or four stars—just 10 percent of the 300-odd he has reviewed—a full 56 percent have served French cuisine, and only 3 percent Italian. At the other extreme, 13 percent of the restaurants Miller has reviewed got no stars. Logan has found that 27 percent of these establishments were Italian and a mere 6 percent French. Miller, it may be worth noting, has been married twice, both times to Frenchwomen.

#### At the Bookstore: The Sunday Book Review Effect

Let us now turn to the value of coverage on the front page of the *New York Times* Book Review. Consider the cases of two young fiction writers, Susan Minot and Carole Maso. Minot was unknown until her first, novel-like collection of stories, *Monkeys*, received a front-page nod from A. R. Gurney in the Book Review in April 1986. In the wake of this piece, additional reviews and profiles of the author appeared in *People*, *Time*, *The New York Review of Books* and other publications. *Monkeys*

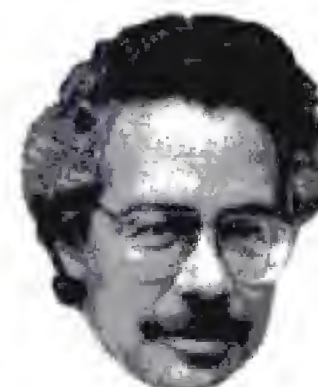
went to four printings and sold more than 20,000 copies in hardback; it was translated into 12 foreign-language editions (sales reached 20,000 in Italy). The book was issued in paperback and optioned by Universal Pictures. In contrast, Maso's first novel, *Ghost Dance*, was reviewed favorably back on page 18 of the Book Review and sold roughly 7,000 copies, an estimable number somewhat short of stardom. Did it mean anything that the more successful book had received a front-page review?

"Sheer poppycock," said Genevieve Stuttaford of *Publishers Weekly* to the suggestion of the *Times*'s influence. Relatively few of *PW*'s annual best-sellers—the Danielle Steels, Robert Ludlums and Tom Clancys—are reviewed on the cover of the Book Review, Stuttaford pointed out. Sure, she said, the daily *Times* and the *Times* Book Review are two of the most widely read literary forums in the country. And yes, raves from the two can help sell books. But there are other important reviews. The whole process of making a best-seller depends upon things like promotion and distribution, not simply reviews.

True, just two of the 30 books on *PW*'s lists of best-selling fiction and nonfiction had been covered on the front page of the *Times* Book Review. But writers such as Tom Clancy and Danielle Steel are the literary equivalent of Eddie Murphy and Bette Midler—artists with star power, who don't need reviews to sell. More important, consider the five pairs of books shown in Chart D, which are similar in every way except for the kind of reviews they received.

Is there any way to defend one's movie, play, restaurant or book against the ravages of the critics? One established method is through sheer, bankable star power. Although last winter's *Harlem Nights* was generally panned, it still grossed \$16 million in its first weekend, thanks to the presence in it of Eddie Murphy. A second way may be to write your own review. An English comedian who was appearing at a festival in Edinburgh, Malcolm Hardee, passed himself off as a freelance critic to a local paper, which happily published his pseudonymously bylined rave. Attendance surged.

One heartening final thought: just because critics are grotesquely powerful doesn't mean they're not a force for good. Without Siskel, Rich, Miller, the *Times* Book Review and all their colleagues in criticism, many more of us might have paid \$6 to see *Ishtar* or \$55 to see *The Threepenny Opera*, or forked over \$40 for dinner at Mortimer's, or spent \$18.95 for copies of *First Father*, *First Daughter* that would have gone unread. But most of us escaped those fates, thanks to the critics, the unsung guardians of America's good mood. ▀



**A Spotter's Guide, Part 2**  
(from top) Woody Allen worshiper Vincent Canby; astute highbrow guru Pauline Kael; newsweekly fixtures Richard Schickel and David Ansen; ABC's Joel Siegel, who has never met a movie he didn't like








Expansive Italian businessman Giancarlo Parretti's sudden presence in Hollywood has piqued the industry's imagination. How did this Italian Socialist bankroll his \$1.5 billion media empire? How was this ex-waiter—arrested in 1981 for bank fraud and in 1986 for extortion—able two years ago to buy both the Cannon Group, the force behind the Chuck Norris and Charles Bronson oeuvres, and Pathé Cinéma, France's oldest film company? And how is he now maneuvering, with Time Warner's help, to acquire MGM/UA for another \$1.2 billion? Many have speculated (Qaddafi oil money? The Crédit Lyonnais? The Mafia?), but until now the facts have remained elusive regarding

# the MYSTERY of the INSTANT MOGUL



**G**iancarlo Parretti is Hollywood's latest hero-from-zero mystery. Just a few years ago, in 1982, he was an employee of a fish-processing factory in Hong Kong. Now his empire—which includes movie studios, theaters, film laboratories and distributors, and production companies on two continents—is worth, according to a claim he made in *Variety*, \$1.5 billion. In 1988 he bought the oldest film company in France, Pathé Cinéma, as well as the Cannon Group, a Hollywood studio best known for its ninja and vengeance fantasies (and that Parretti subsequently renamed Pathé Communications Corporation). Since then he has announced a new multimillion-dollar deal almost every month. In March Parretti stunned both Hollywood and Wall Street by bidding \$1.2 billion for MGM/UA—a movie company that both Rupert Murdoch and Ted Turner had looked at only months before but decided to pass on. In the documents Parretti filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, he specified no source for the \$1.2 billion other than an “oral, non-binding agreement” for \$200 million. He bragged that he didn't even have an investment banker to raise the rest of the financing. Less than three weeks later (and just days after Billy Crystal had joked during the Oscars about Parretti's murky Italian origins) an Italian court in Naples sentenced him in absentia to three years and ten months in prison for fraudulent bankruptcy. Undaunted by this conviction, Parretti was boasting in April that he was on the verge of signing a \$650 million deal with Time Warner to distribute his MGM/UA films.

by Edward Jay Epstein

What other deals has Parretti announced over the past year and a half? In January 1989 he announced an \$80 million plan to bail out D.E.G., Dino De Laurentiis's movie studio,



## OLIVER TWISTINI

the life and times of Giancarlo Parretti



His is a story of no common polarity or consequence. We find Giancarlo first in 1958, a youth of 17 years and of diminutive stature employed as a waiter in Siracusa, Italy. His family has reared him without the inconvenience of too much food or too much clothing.

from bankruptcy so he could merge it into his own. In February 1989 it was a \$160 million film-production agreement with Menachem Golan, the Israeli entrepreneur who with his cousin Yoram Globus had built Cannon into a trans-oceanic filmmaker and theater owner. That same month he made a \$138 million offer for New World Entertainment, a movie-and-television producer. In March 1989 Parretti made a \$39 million offer for the production company Kings Road Entertainment. In April he first floated the idea of taking over MGM/UA, for \$1 billion. The next month he bid \$228 million for Telemontecarlo, a media company.

As it turned out, none of these announced deals were actually consummated. Parretti never went through with the Golan plan. Ron Perelman outbid him for New World. The Kings Road purchase fell apart. The Dino De Laurentiis rescue failed. MGM/UA rejected Parretti's bid and accepted instead an offer from an Australian suitor, Qintex (which itself subsequently collapsed). The Telemontecarlo deal also never got off the ground.

Nevertheless, this stranger in fantasyland had put \$90 million into Cannon—and paid another \$150 million to buy Pathé in France. (The French government, however, has yet to allow Parretti to take official title of Pathé, because there was confusion about the amount of foreign capital involved in the deal.) He has also just put up \$50 million in good-faith money on his new, improved MGM/UA takeover. Where did the money come from?

The mystery began for me when I met Parretti at Le Cirque in New York a little over a year ago. Parretti, a short, compact man with eyes that might best be described as avaricious, waved the question away as one would an annoying fly. He preferred to talk in his not yet perfected English about MGM/UA. "When I went there to visit my friend Kirk Kerkorian [head of MGM/UA], I became obsessed with the beautiful girls in the lobby. Those girls are worth a billion—at least," he said, laughing uproariously at his own joke. Parretti blamed the "Hollywood mafia" for blocking his first bid for the studio: "They are out to stop me, to destroy me." But he declined to identify this mafia, saying only, "I don't care; all that matters is to die in the arms of a beautiful woman." (In a subsequent interview with the Italian Communist Party newspaper *L'Unita*, he named "the Jews and the Japanese" as his "enemies"—a rather sweeping conceit for a man who would buy Hollywood.)

How was he going to finance his acquisition of MGM/UA (which was already \$355 million in debt)? He evaded the question, recounting instead his astrological qualities. "I am a Scorpio," Parretti told me, "and Scorpions make their own world." His grand design, which he described with excited hand gestures, is nothing short of a Euro-American media empire that would include production companies, theaters, tourist cities, television, video stores, film li-

braries and magazines. "One of the real assets of Cannon is the thousands of unproduced scripts it has in its vaults. I want to make them into movies for Europe, South America, the world," he said. But before he could explain where the financing would come from or what the surefire scripts were, he was diverted by the arrival of the pasta. He leapt up to help the captain prepare it. When he finally sat down to eat, a plume of cigarette smoke wafted over from the table behind us. A heavily jeweled woman was the offender. Again Parretti jumped up. He unfurled his dinner napkin and with it fanned the smoke back in the face of the startled woman. "I don't like to be interrupted," he announced.

Parretti is exceedingly difficult to pin down. Where does he live? His business card lists offices in Paris, Rome, New York, Madrid and Los Angeles, but his real office, he said, is his Gulfstream jet: "It's wherever I am, which may be Tahiti or Bora Bora." His secretary is, he said, "my pilot." His schedule changes "with every phone call." The night before we met, he had flown in from Rome. "Tomorrow," he said, "I will be in Rio de Janeiro making a deal." As he raced out the door he handed out "as presents" to the waiters bottles of Tuscan wine he'd bought at the restaurant. He never really answered the \$1.2 billion question—the source of his financing.

IN HOLLYWOOD—WHEN HE IS THERE—Parretti lives Jay Gatsby-style in a \$9 million Beverly Hills mansion, where visitors are often taken to a walk-in steel vault to look at paintings he proudly identifies as Picassos, Mirós and Goyas. He shares the mansion with Maria Cecconi, his wife of more than 20 years, his son and two daughters, and Fabio





Several years thereafter he is apprised of the intricacies of the English language while employed as a ship's steward on the *Queen Elizabeth*.



Having impressed upon others the extent of his abilities to fetch and proffer foodstuffs at a well-appointed hotel in Sicily owned by one Senator Verzotto, he is named manager of the hotel and the senator's aide-de-camp.

Serena, his 37-year-old lawyer. (Cecconi, Serena and his oldest daughter are also executives of his holding company.) For getting around town, Parretti owns a \$200,000 Rolls-Royce. He also owns a large interest in an Italian restaurant, Madeo, on the ground floor of the ICM Building (which has a special satellite hookup to get Italian soccer games), and the private club-disco Tramps.

Like the hero of Gogol's *Dead Souls*, who spawns rumor after rumor about himself as he moves through the Russian provinces trying to buy up rights to deceased serfs in order to further a financial scheme, Parretti, trying to buy up near-dead film companies, has stirred the collective imagination of Hollywood.

"The word is the Mafia is behind him," a top agent suggests.

"Parretti is a creature of Crédit Lyonnais," says a studio executive. He has been sent to America, the executive says, to salvage the bank's bad loans to Cannon, De Laurentiis, New World and other shaky Hollywood producers.

"Parretti is laundering money for the drug cartel," says a Hollywood investment banker, pointing out that movie theaters are cash businesses and that what Parretti has bought in Cannon and Pathé is 600 movie theaters.

"He is fronting for Silvio Berlusconi [the Milanese media king]," insists an Italian movie director.

"It's Qaddafi's oil money," says an American film producer.

This proliferation of lurid rumors does not sit well with Alan Ladd Jr., the well-liked and widely respected former head of both 20th Century Fox and MGM/UA, who for the last year and a half has been Pathé's cochairman and therefore Parretti's man in Hollywood. Like his father in *Shane*, Ladd wastes no words. "It's all I hear. And it's complete garbage," he says when I visit him at his plush new office at Pathé Communications, on San Vicente Boulevard. Ladd met Parretti at the home of Dino De Laurentiis in late 1988 and almost immediately accepted Parretti's offer to head Pathé, which put Ladd in the difficult position of having to defend a virtual stranger with an iffy reputation to a community he had grown up in.

Shaking his head in disbelief, Ladd cites a recent newspaper allegation that Parretti was involved with Libyan dictator Mu'ammar Qaddafi: "The re-

porter mixed up Liberia, where Parretti had a shipping business, and Libya." Parretti has had nothing to do with Libya or Qaddafi, Ladd insists.

He finds the Mafia-money whispers equally absurd. Why would the mob put money in someone as "high-profile" as Parretti? he asks. "Don't you think I investigated before I took this job?"

Ladd says that last spring he went to Europe with Parretti on the Gulfstream-cum-office, which, he recalls, was equipped with a kitchen where Parretti, Francis Ford Coppola-style, would cook spaghetti for everyone. During the trip Parretti handed Ladd a telephone-book-size listing of the European and South American luxury hotels in the Meliá chain, which Parretti claimed he owned. "There were hundreds of hotels, and each of them represented real money," Ladd says. He recalls attending a press conference in Cannes at which Parretti suggested that these hotels earned a \$300 million profit in two years.

There is, Ladd concludes, "no mystery" about where Parretti's money comes from.

Case closed.

As it turns out, Parretti does not own the Meliá hotel chain. Nor did he own it when he handed Ladd the impressive Meliá directory. The truth is that he, together with others, had bought the Meliá Group in 1987, but the hotels themselves—the company's main asset—were resold almost immediately to the Sol Hotel



The spaghetti-preparing tycoon unwinding in the *cucina* with the *bambini* (left) and looking *molto sportivo* in the *ufficio* (right)







Senator Verzotto, it seems, conducts business in a fashion both unsavory and lively: he is indicted for embezzlement and nearly killed by a dragoon of assassins. This being the stuff of one's worst imaginings, the senator flees, whereupon our hero, now a man of 4 and 30 years, takes charge of his patron's hotels and soccer team.

chain in a complicated transaction that left Parretti and his associates owning the name Meliá. According to its annual report released in 1988, Parretti's holding company, which included "Meliá International," had a net worth nowhere near the \$1.5 billion figure he supplied to *Variety*; the report claimed a total of \$3.6 million (and even this sum is based on questionable evaluations of illiquid investments). And contrary to his claim at the Cannes press conference attended by Ladd that his businesses made a biannual profit of \$300-million — or a cumulative profit of \$1 billion, as he claimed in an interview with the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica* — they actually lost money, according to his own annual report, in both 1986 and 1987. Moreover, the holding company had only \$9,000 in its bank accounts and in short-term funds at the end of 1987, the last year for which it filed an annual report.

So the hotels did not supply Parretti with the \$60 million or so he spent on his first Hollywood buying spree in 1988. Which still leaves the question, *where does he get his money?*

ACCORDING TO HIS BIRTH CERTIFICATE, GIANCARLO PARRETTI WAS BORN ON October 23, 1941, in the medieval town of Orvieto, Umbria, about 75 miles north of Rome. In 1958, at the age of 17 and without the benefit of any higher education, Parretti went to work as a waiter. During the sixties, he says, he learned some English working as a ship's steward on the *Queen Elizabeth* and as a waiter at The Savoy Hotel in London (though neither the Cunard Line nor The Savoy Hotel could find any record of his employment). Eventually he moved to Sicily, where he got a job waiting tables in a plush hotel in Siracusa. This was young Parretti's first real break, for the hotel was owned by Palermo's political boss, Senator Graziano Verzotto.

By 1973 Parretti was managing the hotel and serving as aide-de-camp to Senator Verzotto, who also owned Siracusa's soccer team and supervised Sicily's state-owned mineral company. Parretti's second break came when his patron was indicted for embezzling \$3 million from the mineral company; to make matters worse (or better, depending on your perspective), the senator was nearly gunned down by what was presumably a team of Mafia hit men. In 1975 he fled to Lebanon, leaving Parretti in charge of his hotels as well as the soccer team.

After Verzotto disappeared, Parretti went into the business of publishing daily newspapers, called *Il Diarios*. Parretti then went into partnership with Cesare De



In the latter part of the decade that saw the advent of jewelry that bespeaks its wearer's humors, our hero commences a partnership with a key financier for the Socialist Party and takes credit for Bettino Craxi's becoming prime minister.

Michelis, a key financier for the Partito Socialista Italiano (PSI), which in coalition with the larger Christian Democratic Party has run Italy since World War II.

Here Parretti made a connection that would ultimately put him in a position to attempt a takeover of MGM/UA: his partner's brother was Gianni De Michelis, who is now Italy's foreign minister but was then, as minister for state shareholdings, in charge of overseeing ENI, a state-owned petrochemical concern — the equivalent of a merged Exxon-Du Pont — that is Italy's single largest generator of foreign exchange. Gianni De Michelis is a long-haired, jowly intellectual whose extracurricular interest is Italian discotheques (a subject on which he actually wrote a book). By hitching his wagon to this rising star, Parretti moved into the inner circles of the Socialist Party, taking credit for helping to bring De Michelis's close friend Bettino Craxi to power as head of the party — and eventually as prime minister

in 1983. (Craxi later denied having any ties to Parretti.) Perhaps more germane to our story, Parretti also became especially active in the party's finances, serving for a time as the treasurer of its youth organization.

His dealings with ENI eventually brought Parretti into con-



Parretti pals the De Michelises: Cesare (left) finances the Socialists, and Foreign Minister Gianni (right, in glasses) rests his feet in Libya beneath a portrait of someone other than Lew Wasserman.







**The end justifies the means.**

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He thereupon makes the acquaintance of his future partner in international finance, Florio Fiorini. Signore Fiorini is the finance director of the state-owned petrol concern, who has allied himself with the Arab element.



Our hero, having squandered the senator's munificence and having been held for falsifying the soccer team's ledgers, asks Fiorini to help him cash a 3-billion-lira savings certificate. The certificate is a crude work of forgery, and our unwitting Italian friend is arrested in 1981 for bank fraud.

tact with his future partner in international finance and film, Florio Fiorini. When the two met in the early 1980s, Fiorini was the finance director of ENI. As such, he was responsible for depositing hundreds of millions of dollars in ENI funds in foreign banks. Part of this money, as it later emerged in an Italian government investigation, came from off-the-books kickbacks and commissions paid to the Saudi Arabian oil behemoth Petromin. These accounts—slush funds, really—were suspected of being used to benefit PSI politicians.

In 1981 Parretti went to see Fiorini. Parretti was in serious financial trouble. His *Il Diario* newspapers, for which he had pledged his hotels as collateral, were \$2.3 million in debt—and facing imminent bankruptcy. Moreover, the Siracusa soccer team that Parretti headed seemed to investigators to be missing large sums of money. Indeed, Parretti would subsequently be arrested and jailed for a week on charges of falsifying the team's books.

He explained to Fiorini that he had a 3-billion-lira savings certificate—the equivalent of about \$3 million—that had been given to him by an unnamed businessman, and he asked for Fiorini's help in cashing it. Fiorini took this, he explained to me, as "a bit of PSI business." In other words, Italian politics as usual. Using his formidable financial connections, he sent Parretti to a small Sicilian bank, which accepted the certificate and gave him part of the money.

When the bank later checked on the certificate that had been given to Parretti, however, it discovered that it was but a crude forgery. Perhaps unbeknownst to Parretti, "three zeros had been added to [the] certificate," according to Fiorini, changing a 3-million-lira certificate into a 3-billion-lira one. This debacle led in July 1981 to Parretti's second arrest, this time on charges of bank fraud. Released again, he went back to Fiorini, telling the corporate money man that he needed \$27,000 to emigrate to Hong Kong, where his patron, De Michelis, had arranged a job for him at an Italian-owned tuna plant. Once again Fiorini got Parretti the money.

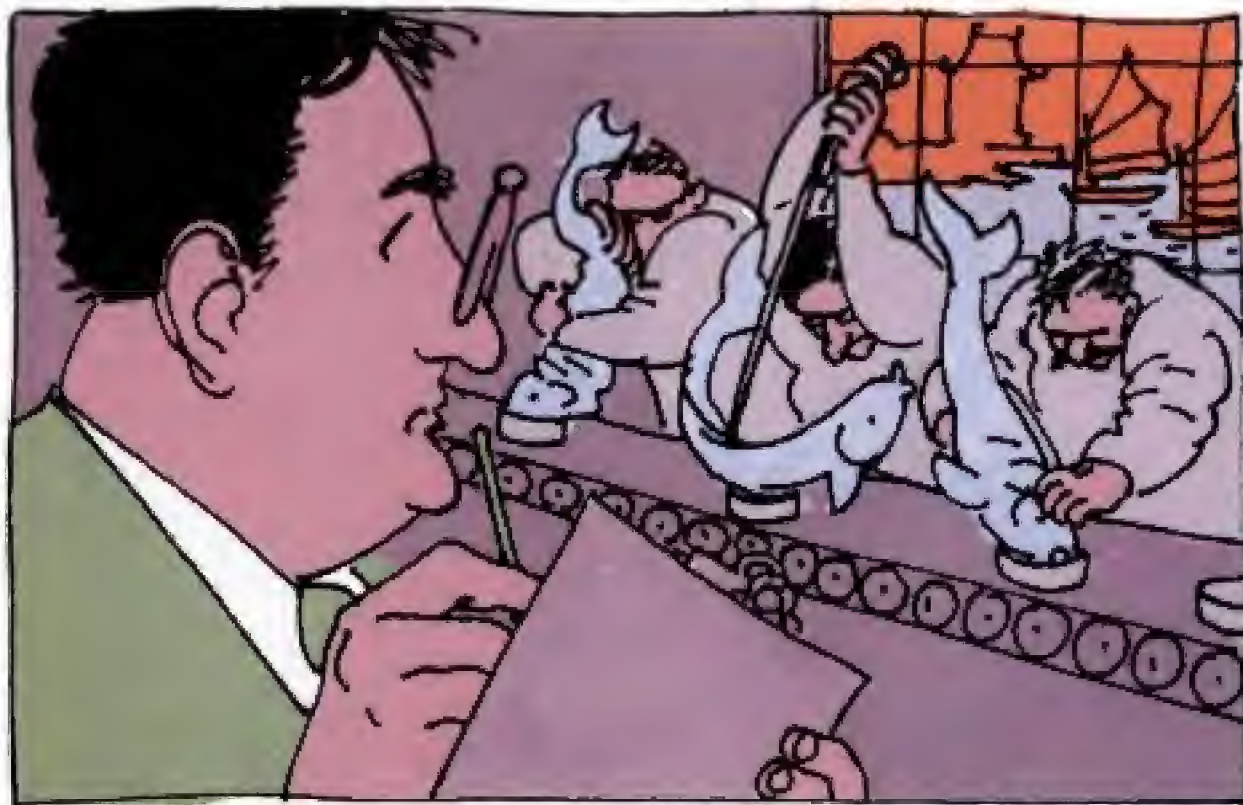
Shortly thereafter, Fiorini had his own rather Byzantine financial troubles. The Banco Ambrosiano, in which Fiorini had placed \$160 million in offshore ENI deposits, announced it was missing more than \$1 billion. Fiorini became intent on saving the bank—and ENI's deposits. He called its chairman, Roberto Calvi, who had become known as "God's banker" because of his connections with the Vatican, and offered to help the bank. Calvi rejected the plan. Less than two weeks later he was found hanging under Blackfriars Bridge in London; his death was ruled a suicide. In the ensuing scandal, Fiorini was fired for his unauthorized offer to Calvi.

Parretti, meanwhile, stopped in Hong Kong only briefly. In 1983 he turned up in Paris, and with his connections to the PSI apparently still intact, if not

strengthened (despite his two recent arrests), he became its secretary in France—again, one of the vagaries of Italian politics, understandable only to the Italians and perhaps to people in Hollywood. As the "French Connection"—Parretti's joke—he acted as liaison between French Socialist businessmen and politicians and their Italian counterparts.

To aid his work, Parretti set up a shell company called Interpart in 1983. It was strategically located in the 998-square-mile kingdom of Luxembourg, a sort of Delaware-cum-Switzerland that provides such corporations maximum secrecy for their transactions. While this shell began with only \$20,000 in capital in 1984, at the end of the year, according to corporate documents, \$1 million in cash had been deposited in its account. Four months later, in April 1985, another \$4 million materialized. And in December 1986 Interpart received an infusion of \$55 million in cash. As this money flowed in—\$60 million altogether, which readers will recognize as a familiar sum—so did Florio Fiorini, who after buying his own shell company in Switzerland became a partner and officer of Interpart. The Luxembourg money first was discreetly channeled into a few select causes sponsored by French Socialist politicians. For example, Parretti, the liaison for the PSI in France, made available \$7 million through a subsidiary to buy the French Socialist newspaper *Le Matin de Paris*; then he turned over 48 percent of the stock in this company to Paul Quilès, who had been the defense minister in the Socialist government. (In 1987 *Le Matin*, like so many of Parretti's enterprises, went bust.) Through Interpart Parretti also established yet another shell company, which was then used by Parretti and Fiorini to buy Pathé, with financing





Later that year Fiorini lends him \$27,000 for passage to Hong Kong, where his influential friends have secured him employment at a tuna-processing plant. It is a time of his life rife with fulsome aroma.



In 1983 our hero and his aroma embark on a trip to Paris, whereat he becomes the Socialists' man in France.

supplied by the French state-owned *Crédit Lyonnais* Bank.

This \$60 million pot was indeed the one used by Parretti in 1988 to start his Hollywood empire. The complicated series of transactions began when Interpart (along with a Swiss holding company controlled by Fiorini) bought 90 percent of the Meliá Group in 1987 for \$90 million—Parretti's share of the purchase price was the \$60 million. After selling the hotels and making a small profit, they used \$90 million of the proceeds to buy Cannon.

But where did Parretti get the initial \$60 million in 1986? Up until that time most of his businesses in Italy, including his newspapers, soccer team, consulting company and hotels, were foundering or bankrupt. He also seemed pressed for cash as late as February 1986, when he was arrested once again, this time at the Rome airport on an extortion charge involving a mere \$20,000. Such desperation over what in Italy is the price of a car suggests that Parretti had no great cash reserve.

Alas, Interpart's scant corporate records are of little use in illuminating the money trail. Parretti's own accountant describes the Luxembourg "headquarters" as an "empty room," administered on paper by Parretti's wife and daughter. And his independent auditor at the time of the multimillion-dollar injections, Arthur Andersen & Company, dryly noted its concern that there was not a single document explaining the origin of the money deposited in Interpart.

I WAS SOMEWHAT HEARTENED WHEN FLORIO FIORINI OFFERED TO ANSWER this \$60 million question. He arranged by fax to meet me in Monte Carlo on a Saturday at "his" bank, the Seychelles Island Bank, at precisely 4:00 p.m. The bank turned out to be a flyspecked three-room suite on a sub-ground-level floor of a large apartment building. A travel poster of a palm tree on a beach in the Seychelles was stuck up on one wall.

Fiorini is a tall, chubby man with boyish features. In the safari jacket he wore that day he reminded me of the character played by Robert Morley in the film *Beat the Devil*. "Seychelles seemed like an appropriate name for this bank," Fiorini mused with disarming honesty, "since it is a shell company."

He told me that he had recently returned from a trip to Tripoli. He said he went to Libya regularly because he was a financial ad-

viser to Qaddafi's Libyan Arab Foreign Bank and had indeed acted as an intermediary in buying and selling assets for Qaddafi.

Just two days before, a warrant had been issued in Spain for—yet again—Parretti's arrest, on charges that he had been smuggling currency to the tiny, Luxembourg-like country of Andorra, located in the Pyrenees between France and Spain. Rather than accepting this as business as usual, Fiorini actually seemed embarrassed by the development. He pointed to an organizational chart of his own holding company, which had six rows of neat boxes on it, circled the box that contained the Meliá-Cannon-Pathé entity and said, "This is only a small part of our operation." As he began telling me of his relationship with Parretti, he took out a pad of graph paper and neatly outlined the story, as if he were writing out a confession.

He explained that their original plan had been to put the money in safe commercial real

estate in Spain. Fiorini said he had also envisioned Cannon primarily as a real estate investment, based on the value of theaters it owned in England, the Netherlands, Italy and the U.S. But then Parretti had become "infatuated by the movie media," as Fiorini put it. Instead of quietly disposing of the film business, Parretti hired Alan Ladd, announced new productions in Cannes, became part of the show business



Alan Ladd Jr. (left) gave Parretti an air of legitimacy in Hollywood. Florio Fiorini (right) introduced him to the airs of a tuna cannery.







Three years later some \$60 million worth of money — all of unknown origin — is deposited into the account of a mysterious company our wee Socialist has started in Luxembourg. Manna from Heaven? Mammon from Mu'ammad? It is all very strange indeed.

scene and embarked on his Hollywood-acquisition juggernaut.

Okay, fine. *But what about the \$60 million?* "That's easy," Fiorini replied. "I made it for Parretti. I sold two insurance companies for him." But when Fiorini sketched this deal out for me, it appeared anything but easy.

How had Parretti acquired the two insurance companies for Fiorini to sell? He explained that Parretti had traded two broken-down hotels he'd owned in Sicily to Giuseppe Cabassi, a Milanese businessman and financial supporter of the Socialist Party, in return for the control of two large Italian insurance companies, Ausonia Assurance and Intercontinentale Assurance.

Fiorini said that in November 1985 he, Fiorini, had just acquired a shell company that had once belonged to the Vatican, and together with a group of Arab partners he had organized it into an entirely legal international laundry (or "*lavanderia*," as he put it) to make "troubled companies sparkle." Parretti, interested in his services, had come to him with an offer he could not refuse: In return for selling his two insurance companies, Parretti would pay Fiorini's Swiss holding company 50 percent of the profits. In addition, Parretti would personally give Fiorini 20 percent of his Luxembourg holding company, Interpart. This meant Fiorini would get 60 percent of the total profit — an incredibly high fee for selling insurance companies listed on the Milan stock exchange.

Fiorini claimed he was immediately able to sell these companies for a profit of more than \$160 million, which, if true, might explain how Parretti's holding company got \$60 million. But as the records of the companies reveal, there are at least three flaws in Fiorini's account.

First, Giuseppe Cabassi never swapped his insurance companies for Parretti's hotels — indeed, trading two companies supposedly worth \$300 million for some crummy Sicilian hotels would be folly on an unusually grand scale, especially since the stock of one of the insurance companies had hit a record high on the Milanese exchange. Instead, the records show, Cabassi paid Parretti what amounted to \$3 million for the hotels. But Cabassi never actually got the hotels. As he explained to *The Wall Street Journal*, "Parretti apparently wasn't in a position to sell them to us." And, bearing this out, the insurance companies belonged to the Cabassi Group as late as 1986, which in the case of Intercontinentale Assurance is even acknowledged in the annual report of Fiorini's own holding company.

Second, if Fiorini's holding company made a profit of \$97 million on these transactions, it would have shown up in the company's annual reports. But it didn't, not in 1986, 1987 or 1988. In fact, the company's profit over these years averaged less than \$7 million per year. There wasn't any windfall.

Finally, and most definitively, Parretti's holding company, Interpart, reported the \$60 million in cash deposits that materialized in 1984, 1985 and 1986

not as any sort of capital gain or profit but as a new investment for which shares of stock were issued in return.

SO THE MYSTERY REMAINS: WHOSE MONEY bought Pathé and Cannon, and whose money might now buy MGM/UA?

If Parretti himself did not have millions of dollars to put into Interpart, as seems highly probable given his business failures and bankruptcy problems and arrests, the Luxembourg money must have come from someone else — a party who, first of all, had \$60 million hidden away in Luxembourg or other discreet banking centers and, second, trusted Parretti enough to let him act as custodian for his money while it was transformed into more conventional commercial real estate investments.

The key to this mystery lies in Parretti's status in 1984, when cash first began coming into Interpart. At that time he was not a typical businessman. To state the relationship bluntly, the Italian Socialist Party was the principal, Parretti its agent abroad. Moreover, it was a connection that has fueled most of Parretti's business career. He had managed money for the PSI's youth organization; published *Il Diario* newspapers that supported the party; worked as a go-between for the party and the state-owned petrochemical company, in attempting to take over the magazine *El Globo*; and allied himself for a decade with Italian foreign minister Gianni De Michelis, whose faction prevailed in the PSI. Nor did Parretti run Interpart entirely on his own: its original administrator was Lamberto Mazza, a trusted financier for the PSI in Italy. And Interpart's early disbursements of funds in France were hardly conventional business investments: the money





Only two years ago our hero used this money to acquire Cannon Films and Pathé. We now find him claiming a \$1.5 billion media empire. His fortune remains a conundrum given that many of his businesses have failed and that years ago he was arrested for extortion after an unsuccessful attempt to borrow \$20,000 from a bank! A most misterioso man indeed.

went directly to PSI's allies in the Socialist network.

Fiorini also had close ties to the party. At ENI, along with others, he had helped run the offshore-banking labyrinth through which the company passed funds to be diverted directly into PSI coffers. One such deal, with Mu'ammarr Qaddafi's Libyan oil company, worked like this: the Libyans agreed to defer for two years 40 percent of the money ENI owed them for crude-oil purchases; thus, if ENI sold a barrel of Libyan oil to Italian consumers, it paid the Libyan oil agency only 60 percent of the wholesale price and kept the rest in its own bank account, earning interest. Fiorini estimates that by 1982 ENI was holding \$3 billion of this Libyan money and, at the double-digit interest rates that existed then, earning hundreds of millions of dollars of interest on it. Enter Roberto Calvi, whose Banco Ambrosiano was one of the banks that provided ENI with highly discreet offshore services. Fiorini had negotiated a deal with Calvi in which ENI deposits were transferred from ENI subsidiaries in the Caribbean to various offshore subsidiaries of Banco Ambrosiano.

But everything suddenly changed when the Banco Ambrosiano collapsed in 1982. Calvi was found dead, auditors determined \$1.3 billion had disappeared from the bank—including the \$160 million in ENI deposits—and Fiorini was fired. This was the difficulty that propelled Fiorini (who was never actually charged with a crime) out of ENI and into partnership with Parretti.

The ensuing financial scandal also arguably left the various individuals and institutions who had numbered accounts in offshore Banco Ambrosiano branches with a problem: without arousing public attention, these investors had to reclaim the funds that had been stashed away for them. This, in turn, would require a front, preferably one veiled by the secrecy of Luxembourg's banking laws, into which the money could be deposited and gradually channeled into more conventional investments.

Enter Giancarlo Parretti.

The spaghetti financing of the 1980s is now history. On the verge of taking over MGM/UA, Parretti can dismiss questions about the source of his financing, as he did in the French financial daily *Les Echos*, with such junk bond jargon as "It's a classic American leveraged buyout. You pay with what

you buy." But the path to the \$1.2 billion turned out to be anything but "classic" American. According to sources close to the negotiations, Parretti and Fiorini first tried French banks for the MGM/UA money. Rebuffed, Parretti then reportedly approached a Saudi prince living in Rome, while Fiorini pursued the Libyan connection by seeking financing from Qaddafi's former oil and finance minister. Neither was interested in going to Hollywood.

Finally, with the deadline for raising the \$1.2 billion approaching, Time Warner came through by announcing in April it would lend or guarantee Parretti \$650 million for the deal. It was an intentionally complicated game of musical chairs: Time Warner would theoretically lend the money to MGM/UA, which would transfer it to Parretti's Pathé, which then would hand the check back to MGM/UA's shareholders in exchange for MGM/UA. The point of the exercise was to provide Time Warner with a fig leaf: technically it was not lending money to Giancarlo Parretti—a man who had just been convicted of bankruptcy fraud in Italy. Also, Paul Weiss Rifkind Wharton & Garrison, Time Warner's legal counsel, was still in the process of ascertaining the circumstances surrounding other criminal charges made against Parretti. (The fig leaf did not fool Standard & Poor's, the bond-rating concern, which immediately placed the long-term public debt of Time Warner on its credit watch, citing the negative implications of its financing agreement with Parretti's Pathé.) In return for the financing, Time Warner would get the foreign-distribution rights to both Pathé and MGM/UA films as well as an option to buy 20 percent of Pathé when and if the deal with Parretti is consummated. (Parretti and Fiorini now own 90 percent of the company.) It is not without irony that after Time Warner's flagship magazine,

*Time*, ran a cover story raising fears of a foreign invasion of Hollywood following Sony's purchase of Columbia Pictures—a competitor—Time Warner was risking both its august reputation and its credit rating in order to help another foreigner take over MGM/UA. **D**



Everybody loves the monkey, but only after an introduction from Dino De Laurentiis (left) did MGM/UA chairman Jeffrey Barbakow (right) allow Parretti to wag a digit his way.





# ON SIMILE SAFARI

*Critics caught in the cross hairs as we stalk the extended metaphor*

BY HENRY DUTCH HOLLAND

Over at *The New York Times*, the similes are sprouting like, let's see, like so many weeds — no, make that *wildflowers* — in a desert (field? prairie? aircraft-carrier deck?) of buttoned-down prose. Buttoned-down posies! Or whatever. Listen:

REVIEW  
OF  
REVIEWERS

Vincent Canby thinks *Loose Cannons* "possesses some funny ideas that surface briefly, then disappear, like sick porpoises on a glassy sea." He thinks *Stanley & Iris* has an ending so false that it's "not unlike a facelift that leaves the patient wearing a permanently unconvincing grin." These reviews appeared on the same day.

And Youssef M. Ibrahim writes, in an Arts & Leisure piece on the BBC, that "putting Yasir Arafat in an hour-long documentary film is like pinning down a ball of mercury: a heroic effort requiring patience, perseverance and a great deal of money." (I tried that in seventh grade — pinning down mercury, that is, not capturing Arafat in an hour-long documentary — and it was neither heroic nor expensive.)

The prose, and verse, is getting even more alarming in the *Times's* sports pages. For example, Ira "Ernest Lawrence Thayer" Berkow decided that coverage of the tedious major-league baseball deadlock needed a spark. A new angle. Something fresh. Something that hadn't been done before in sportswriting. Something like — *got it!* — a parody of "Casey at the Bat":

The outlook isn't brilliant for the Mudville lads this day;

The score stands zero to zero with who knows how many innings more to play?

To hell with meter — this is *fun*.

For all the years until the 70's, the owners held the players like chattel;

Then the minions finally awoke, and their union began to rattle.

And I expect I may be the only reader who made it *this* far:

The owners have kept the training camps locked up for some 14 days;

This has given the players a chance to golf, swim, and get some rays.

This goes on for eleven stanzas. The above examples are just *half* stanzas, the only permissible over-the-counter dosage.

In fairness, the *Times's* much-maligned sports section is capable of great versatility. Readers may remember this informative headline during the Big East basketball tournament: TOURNAMENT WILL END EMOTIONAL SEASON, it said. ALL EXCEPT ONE TEAM WILL SHARE THE INEVITABLE HEARTBREAK OF BEING DEFEATED. *What?* Only *one* team wins? Same tired old tournament rules, it seems.

The story itself, by Malcolm Moran, began, "The rapid-fire images of joy and heartbreak that have made the tournament so marketable ignore the weeks, months and years of what might have been. We watch the tears. We go on to the next game. We check the brackets and wonder: where is this year's Seton Hall?"

If that sounds a bit overwrought even

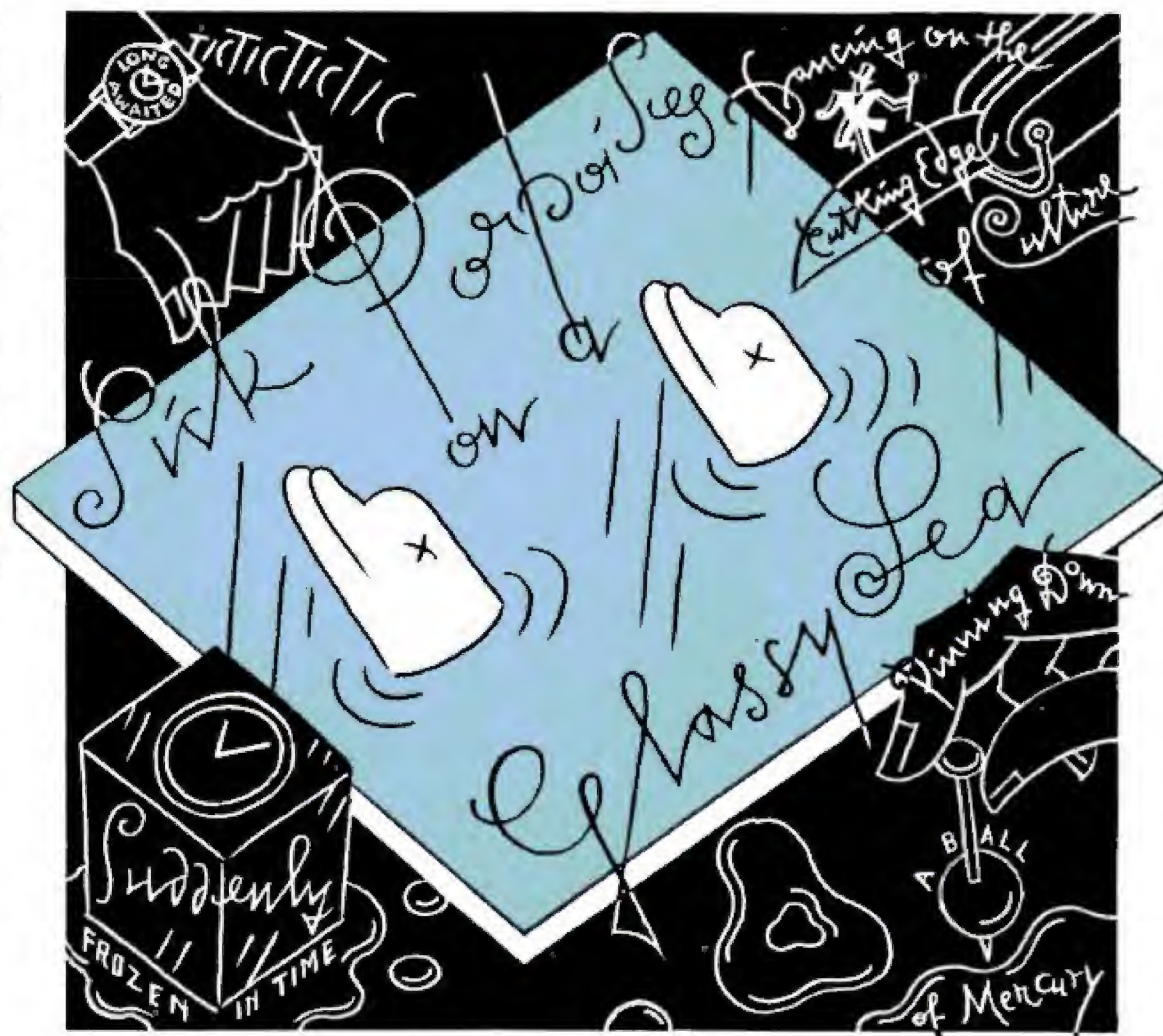


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for the sports pages, Moran was hardly breaking form. His piece the previous day had begun with the words "Suddenly frozen in time"—not a good omen. In short order he was rhapsodizing about the Connecticut Huskies' close win over Syracuse:

"Years from now...they will remember the time they were all young, and not yet aware of limitations, and fully understanding the importance of a whole that is greater than the sum of the parts."

And what of poor Syracuse's loss, after so many victories? "That is the business of another time, a cruel business."

And Connecticut's future? "That is a thought for another day, in a business that cannot undo a time that has already become that championship season."

Red Smith must be spinning in his grave, Roger Angell in his office at *The New Yorker*.

Spinning down the hall from Angell is Brendan Gill, whose slow-motion book review, in *The New Yorker*, of Paul R. Baker's *Stanny: The Gilded Life of Stanford White* begins, "If ever a cliché may be said to have increased in applicability over the years, it is 'long-awaited' when employed to describe a satisfactory biography of Stanford White." Dozens of measured sentences later, Gill writes, "The latest attempt at a biography of White that would send the cliché 'long-awaited' into honorable retirement has recently been published." By the time he concludes—a long time later—with "To our chagrin, the cliché 'long-awaited' remains in force," no one can say that Brendan Gill has not done all one man can do to assure that *long-awaited* not only remains a cliché but also continues to be properly recognized as such.

Life throws the occasional change-up at critics. Sometimes it takes the form of a screenplay that includes a protagonist who works in a rectal-probe factory. In this situation a movie reviewer can either (a) mention it, (b) not mention it or (c) do what David Edelstein did and just go wild with it. Reviewing *Joe Versus the Volcano*, the *New York Post's* most impassioned critic saw his opportunity and took it. Edelstein calls the factory that Joe (Tom Hanks) works in "an excremental hellhole." He says that screenwriter-director John Patrick Shanley's characters have "diarrhea of the mouth." He says that Shanley himself has "diarrhea of the pen." He confesses an early "premonition the

picture would go down the toilet." He admits disappointment that it went "down the toilet so listlessly." And so Edelstein—a *normally fine critic*, as I've said here before—has shifted or expanded his metaphoric repertoire from the sexual to the scatological.

His *Post* colleague Bob "the Cabaret Artist's Friend" Harrington had this to say about Miss Peggy Lee: "You just sort of lean forward into her interpretations"—what Edelstein could have done with that!—"and let them run down your central nervous system, savoring every note and nuance." Well, okay. But synaptic firing aside, did he like the performance? "If you love music, you'll love this show." Guess we'd all better go, then. No equivocating *there*.

Food writers, as a rule, aren't good writers; it's a pity Seymour Britchky or Calvin Trillin—or, of course, SPY's Ann Hodgman—can't be sent to cover the opening of every menu. Most food writers do just fine as long as the writing involves specifying stars and half stars, but give them features—to *write*—and you are asking for trouble. In Bryan Miller's Valentine's Day preview, "Havens for the

Heart in a Hard-boiled City," the *New York Times* critic tells us that New York is "the world's biggest hypertension colony," "[a] city of cultural overkill," "a town of chance epiphanies," "a saucy Katharine Hepburn." And there are also so many things, according to Miller, that New York is *not*: Paris, Rome, Barcelona, San Francisco, Venice, Lana Turner. Miller makes the obligatory references to Walt Whitman, E. B. White and *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, plus an optional one to Joseph Conrad. He uses such phrases as "one can't help to sense," "dancing on the cutting edge of culture," "baronial homes where great paintings reside" and "freedom, funds and felicitous companionship." But worst of all, he tells us, before we can clap our hands over our ears, the names of some of the "amorous milieus" the Bryan Millers themselves enjoy.

(The *Times* didn't fare much better with another Valentine's Day story, on aphrodisiacs. Reporter Dena Kleiman began her piece with what she imagined was just the right quote from *Lolita*. Unfortunately, the passage she used refers not to aphrodisiacs but to sleeping pills—as would have been evident if

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**Page 102:** Ron Galella, Ltd. (Milken).

Kleiman had read just a few paragraphs more.)

John Heilpern is a gifted, entertaining writer, almost always. Even when given very little to work with, he manages to be funny and charming. Of course, this occasionally means he must resort to bringing himself into the story. Which he absolutely *hates*. Look how reluctant Heilpern is, writing in *Manhattan, inc.* about Stephen Sondheim's current tenure as a professor at Oxford, to talk about his *own* days at alma mater:

"when I read law at Oxford"—second paragraph

"when I went off happily to catch the train for a new term at Oxford"—two sentences later

"when I arrived at Oxford"—next paragraph  
"How then did I spend my time [at Oxford]?"

Why should I tell *you*?—same paragraph

Why? Because, John, like your namesake Simon at *New York* magazine, you *must*. Now...where was it you went to school?

Heilpern, at least, isn't a *character* in the article he's writing, unlike Marshall Blonsky in his profile of Merv Griffin in *Vanity Fair*. (VF likes writers who get *involved*—remember Ron Rosenbaum's story on Ron Rosenbaum and Al Pacino?) It's a piece that could have been written without the author's intruding, but then we wouldn't have been able to enjoy that great scene between Donald and Ivana Trump and Marshall Blonsky, an essential scene if you are really to understand Merv Griffin. The Trumps and Blonsky are leaving an awards dinner. "How do you rate that evening?" Trump asks Blonsky. Blonsky replies that he thinks Trump was "edgy." Ivana agrees, more or less. Then Trump replies, "'Well, that's why Marshall said...' and Donald trails off, agreeing with my assessment."

For Blonsky, it was clearly a moment suddenly frozen in time that cannot be undone, a time when they were all young and not yet aware of limitations, and fully understanding the importance of a whole that is greater than the sum of the parts, and not the other business, the cruel business, of another time, or a thought for another day. That is to say, Blonsky's cameo in his own story stands out like...well, like a sick porpoise on a glassy sea. Exactly. ♫

## LET US NOW

# PRAISE

*In which Gore Vidal praises  
that fabulous young writer*

Bret Easton Ellis Weiner



Having a first name that is other people's last name has its moments—headlines like ELLIS BLANKS PHILS ON TWO-HITTER

have a nice intimate feel—but it really paid off big a few months back.

Sort of. The occasion was a phone call from my

brother-in-law, who was eager to read me an interview with Gore Vidal in that week's *Los Angeles Times Magazine*. Vidal was asked which writers he admired. He replied first with Apuleius and Petronius, two writers whose work I hadn't been able to squeeze in between my reading of *The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet* in elementary school and *Neuromancer* last week. "When your spiritual home is classical," he went on, "romantic woolly American writing is just very distasteful." Later he said, "I like some young fellow—Ellis? Something like that, I can't think."

*Who can?* Especially upon hearing one's name uttered by Gore Vidal. The (admittedly ambiguous) sacred trochee had an extra touch of personal significance when read long-distance by my (scrupulously fair, even-tempered) brother-in-law. "He means *you*," Steve declared. And though a quick ransack of the cultural-literacy bin of the mind yielded the possibility—the probability—that Vidal was referring to (*sigh*) Bret Easton Ellis, for that nanosecond in which our most essential, self-serving thought processes take place I reasoned, *Yes, he could*



have read *Less than Zero*, and liked it. But that means he probably also read *The Rules of Attraction*, in which case he meant me.

Me! I sought to divine exactly what particulars of my work had prompted mention of (half of) my name in the same breath with Waugh and Graham Greene. My collection of pieces from a couple of years back, *Decade of the Year*? Possible, but unlikely. The book had only one smallish printing, no advertising, no paperback, no (deserved but pettily withheld) mention in *The New Yorker*. Perhaps Vidal had admired my novelization of *Howard the Duck*? The notion is appealing, but a close reading of this work forces us to acknowledge its somewhat tenuous appeal for the reader whose spiritual home is classical.

No, the only plausible answer had to be this very column. I felt skepticism turn to pure, if slightly trammelled, joy. I knew for a fact that he reads SPY.

Never mind that he was talking about novelists. For an instant I reveled in the thought that my work was being publicly praised by a figure not only accorded respect by one of the Consensus Authorities but whose work I myself actively liked.

**T**he grown-up accepts a compliment  
with grace and thanks, not  
the knee-jerk pseudomodesty of the  
prissy third-grade girl

There were also all those Gore Vidal connections in my past. My wife and I once almost rented his villa in Ravello. (We wrote to him; his assistant wrote back, putting us off for a few months, after which we heard nothing more for the rest of our lives.) Plus, when Vidal ran for the Senate in California, I heard him interviewed on the radio. He was practically family. And now this. For a brief, giddy moment I felt...

I felt the need to neutralize the whole event, arguing sensibly that a monthly



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magazine column could hardly be the basis for, et cetera. Young Steve did his part, counter-pooh-poohing my disclaimer. I insisted it was impossible, coyly let him disagree so that I could enjoy a final frisson, then adopted a brisk, practical tone and changed the subject.

The grown-up, lurking always in the RAM of consciousness, might here activate himself and ask just what the heck I was doing. Why not indulge in the improbable belief that I was the Ellis in question? The answer has nothing to do with modesty or intellectual honesty. It has to do with my seething adolescence, when I bravely decided to ignore peer-group pressures and be True to Myself. In college, surrounded by snickering English majors, I thought Polonius's "To thine own self be true" speech included some darn good advice. I was not a complete idiot—I disliked Ayn Rand, at least—but I felt a weird empathy for G. Gordon Liddy after reading *Will*, his rugged-individualist-crackpot-nerd autobiography.

The result: a tendency to forswear official validation, to not care, or at least not want to care, if Gore Vidal mentions

half my name. The more authoritative the gift of praise, the more I must return it, with polite thanks. *I'm being True to Myself, damn it.* Talk about your romantic woolly Americans! Or is it that I don't want to be flattered because I don't want to be vulnerable to subsequent dismissal?

It hardly matters. The whole business takes place in the mind. Meanwhile, emotionally I'm as ravenous for and susceptible to praise as the next slob, and will write two-page answers to fan letters from schoolchildren. (Have I mentioned that they loved my novelization of *Howard the Duck*?)

Probably the grown-up doesn't perform these contortions in the name of humility. Probably the grown-up accepts a compliment—or the faint possibility of a compliment—with grace and thanks, and not with either the tight-lipped dismissal of the adolescent resolving to be true to himself ("Wow—neat shirt!" "...") or the knee-jerk pseudomodesty of the prissy third-grade girl ("Did you draw that? It's good." "No it isn't").

On the other hand, who is more grown-up than a resolute adolescent or a prissy third-grade girl? ☞



# UN-BRITISH

# CROSSWORD

# ANSWERS

## ACROSS

1. The Secretariat (also the name of a great racehorse, of course) is the apparatchik class in Russia, or has been. Who will take on their duties now? Freely elected bozos? Ward heelers' cousins? Uncivil service employees? One hears that nobody is taking care of much functionary business in the USSR lately. Imagine all the groundwork that has to be laid before democratic officialdom can be in place at every level of Soviet society. Local Sunday-morning interview shows will have to be produced: *Spotlight on Novgorod*, *Your Tax Ruble at Work in Grozny*. The whole concept of bid-rigging will have to be absorbed. There's probably no such thing as paving contractors, as we know them, in the Soviet Union today. Now's the time to get an enlightened campaign-financing law in on the ground floor; unfortunately, before there will be anyone to pass such a law, there will have to be campaigns. Whatever it takes to win those campaigns will be the source of enlightenment.

10. A plus *p* (the music-score abbreviation for *piano*) plus *hid* ("concealed") gives you the synonym for *plant louse*. This puzzle has been going on for more than three years, and I still have to explain stuff like this. That will give you some idea how long it is going to take Russkies to grasp the concept of image-mongering and the electoral college.

11. Doves *con*. Kansas street is KA and *st*. East-west is EW.

12. USSR (Union of Soviet Republican Republics)? UNCLESAM (Union of Neighboring Countries Liable Each to Secede Any Minute)?

18. To confront is to *face*. Plus *it* backward and *ea*, also backward. If you ever happen to write a book of trenchant, finely wrought and deeply unsettling essays and stories, you may find that the Library of Congress has classified them as "anecdotes, facetiae, satire, etc." This is an outrage. I bet it doesn't go on in godless Communist... Cuba, even.

20. *As* is the symbol for gold.

28. Manute Bol is a Golden State Warrior, right? (Aside from being a seven-foot-seven Dinka tribesman from the Sudan who has found a place for himself in our system.) And if he can't find the range—keeps missing shots—he's *cold*, right? You don't like it? Hey, it's a free country.

## DOWN

2. If you don't know basketball, you must know Latin, right? What *were* you doing in high school? You can bet that young people in what used to be known as the Eastern bloc (now the New Free World) are learning these things.

3. Maybe you can't embarrass a Communist, I don't know. Anyway, if they all want to be free-marketeers now, it is okay with me. As long as they don't start turning out facetiae cheaper than I can.

4. *Into* and S.C. rearranged ("whirls").

6. *Arch* in *any*.

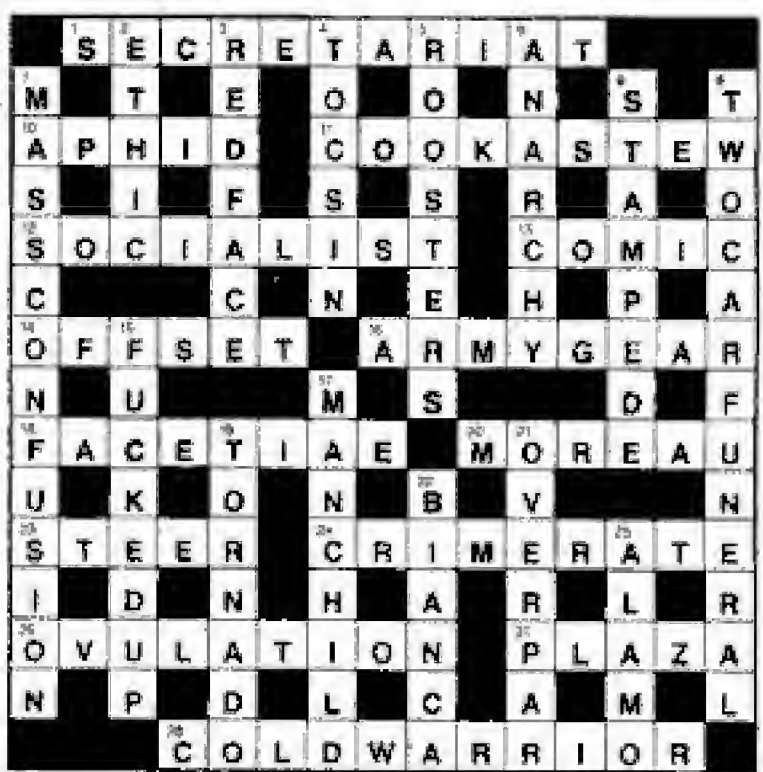
9. The saying goes, "He could fuck up a two-car funeral."

17. *Man* is a sexist term for "person."

19. *R* (*right*) and *and* rearranged ("messy") inside *too* gives you a twister.

22. The breath spray is Binaca.

25. The two states are Alabama and Missouri. The official post office abbreviation for Alabama now is AL, but surely you remember the more stately *Ala*. And what better note to end on, as our puzzle draws to a close and the sun sinks suddenly in the East (why shouldn't they have a sunset over there too?)—what better note than a salute to that gallant handful of Texans and Tennesseans who didn't see why they couldn't whip several thousand Mexicans in a town named San Antonio? If 3 million Russian tourists should descend on Moscow, Idaho, or St. Petersburg, Florida, we could do worse than to remember brave Bowie, Travis and Crockett. ☺



# BEAT THE

# DEVIL

*No one ever said arresting Satan  
would be easy*

BY PATRICIA PEARSON

"The difference between serial killers and Satanists," Clark County, Ohio, deputy sheriff Tom Wedge says, scratching his neck with a wooden pointer, "is your serial killers roam all over the country doing their killing. A Satanist, now, he will stay right there in his hometown." This distinction is offered to the 40 police officers who have signed up for a three-day seminar on "occult crime investigation" being held in a Philadelphia hotel conference room. The officer-pupils wear blank, earnest faces and V-neck sweaters. They stare fixedly at their instructor, a large, tubby fellow in a brown suit with cuffs ending four inches above his shoes. His badge glints in the light of a slide projector as he wades between the podium and his display table, attempting to enlighten his troops about the world of violent Satanism. "Remember," he repeatedly exhorts the band of officers from New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland, "it doesn't matter what you or I believe, it's what Satanists believe that makes them dangerous."

Wedge ought to know. The biography in his book, *The Satan Hunter*, states that "in addition to being a former juvenile probation officer with the Logan County Common Pleas Court, Wedge is one of the leading experts on Satanism and the Occult in the U.S." For the past ten years he has traveled around the country dispensing what he calls the "simple facts of Satanism" to police officers and community groups for \$350 per student. "These



Satanists aren't foolin' around," he gravely informs his audiences.

Tom Wedge is not the only cop with an inside view of the occult-crime trend in America. In fact, occult-crime consulting has become a law-enforcement cottage industry. There are now hundreds of experts like Wedge—thousands, if you include the officers who put together Satanic-crime handbooks and conduct seminars around their own neighborhoods. Some "cult cops" are solo operators like Wedge. They advise police departments on individual cases and lecture at regional seminars (such as the Virginia Fire Prevention Association's symposium on "Cult Awareness"). Others have formed consulting groups—such as Ritualistic Crime Consultants in Houston, the Cult Crime Impact Network in Boise, Idaho, and B.A.D.D. (Bothered About Dungeons and Dragons) in Richmond, Virginia. Officer Larry Jones, head of Cult Crime Impact Network, publishes a monthly newsletter called *File 18*, which keeps readers updated on the Satanist agenda "to take over, at all levels."

Demand for this criminal subspecialty grew out of law-enforcement encounters

**F**or the past ten years Tom Wedge  
has dispensed the  
"simple facts of Satanism"

with mutilated domestic animals, cemetery vandalism, graffiti on church walls—mostly misdemeanors, that is, committed by alienated suburban teenagers with time, and pets, to kill. Teen Satanism is not an encouraging social trend, as Tom Rodgers of the Indianapolis Police Department points out: "These kids are not exactly being productive members of society by hanging around graveyards at two in the morning."

Even as cult cops are now gaining some mastery of their field, guessing is still a substantial part of the enterprise. Some thread dangling from a tree outside Toledo set off a massive excavation of

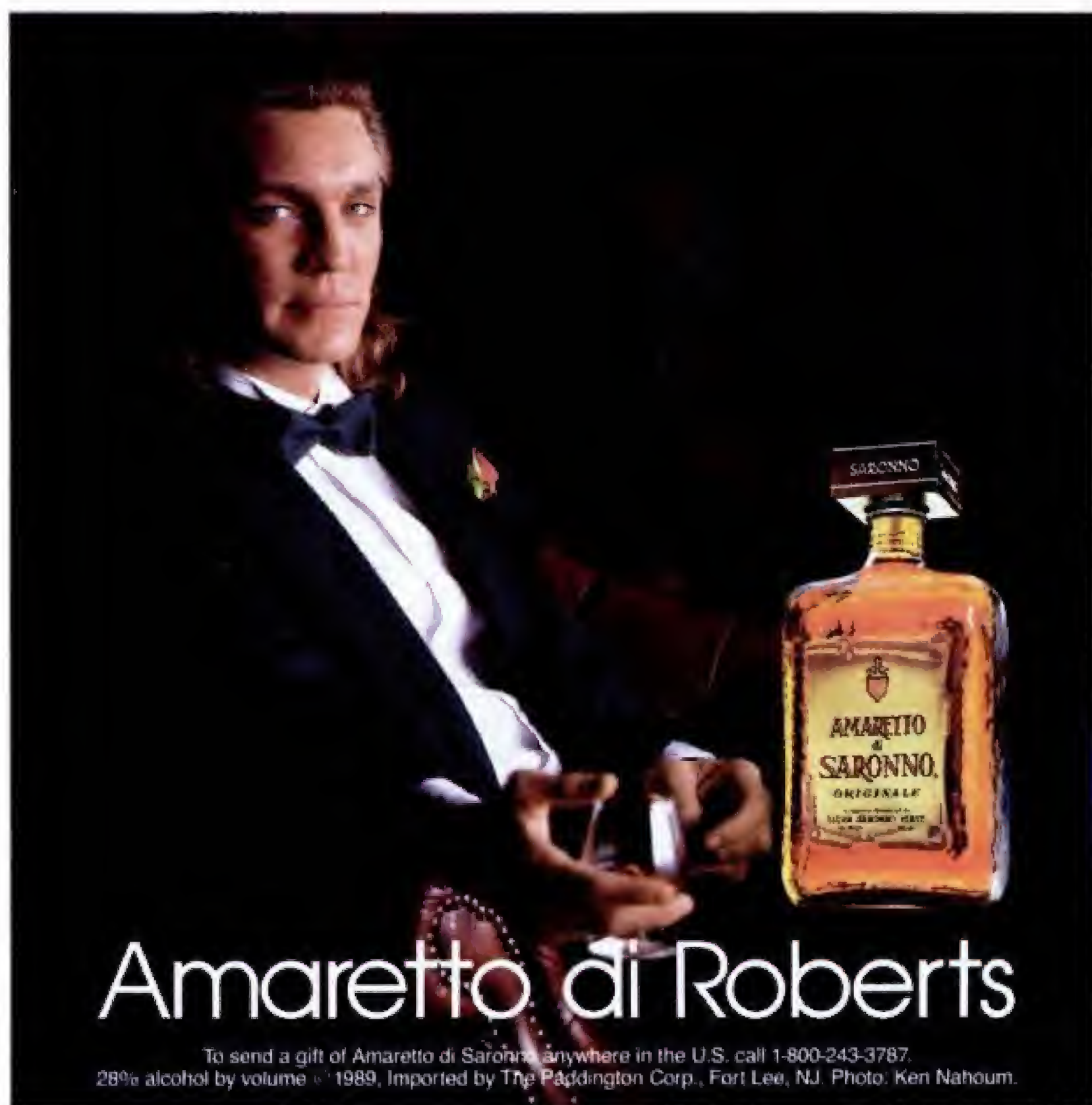
almost three acres of parkland in 1985. Though the excavation turned up nothing, Captain Dale Griffis of Tiffin, Ohio, told investigators that red thread signified a Satanic-ritual site. Elsewhere, evidently unaware of the anarchy symbol, officials have come up with at least 14 different interpretations of why Satanic graffiti artists draw circles with the letter A inside. None of these theories owe any thanks to national law-enforcement institutions. "People have asked the FBI to keep track of occult crime," says FBI special agent Ken Lanning. "As soon as you tell me what it is, maybe I'll start keeping track of it."

Tom Wedge's method of instruction is straightforward. He tells you everything he knows about Satanists, pagans, Nazis, heavy-metal musicians and various other anti-Christians. Then he tries to explain the things you need to know at a Satanic-crime scene. Either you believe him or you don't. It is pretty much irrelevant to both forensic medicine and the judicial system whether a corpse had wax dripped symbolically into the right eye (Satanic) or left eye (not Satanic—perhaps related to the worship of Pan).

Laid out on a display table is Wedge's personal collection of skull candles, voodoo dolls, Nazi insignias, tarot cards, Lover's Sampler sexual lubricant and sundry vials said to contain oil of bat's blood, coffin nails and graveyard dirt. The officers are invited to "familiarize" themselves with these items during the 15-minute smoke breaks Wedge allows each hour. Some hold their noses and gag at the smell of a little potpourri charm Wedge passes around. "Do *not* grab this or touch it *in any way* [if it is being worn by the person you are attempting to arrest]," Wedge warns them. The suspect will feel unprotected, Wedge says, and might get violent.

Wedge's slide show features pictures of Hitler and Himmler, both of whom, he explains, worshiped Satan. The Jews are God's chosen people, the officers learn, which is why Satanists abhor them. "Six million *what* were killed in the death camps?" Wedge asks. "*Jews*," they respond. "I'm giving you this information for a reason," Wedge says grimly. "I want you to know what you're dealing with."

Wedge also has a stock of Satanic-crime-scene slides. The ones he has pho-



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tographed himself, usually in Ohio, involve things like a fancily tied rope attached to a dead cat in an empty barn. The rope-and-pet arrangement, he says, is "very serious business." It is meant to be a homicidal warning, like the Sicilian Mafia's dead fish. A Pennsylvania child-abuse investigator with thick glasses and a bowl haircut puts up his hand. "I found one of those on my car about two years ago," he says. "I just thought it was a prank."

A segment on heavy metal goes over well with Officer Gordon Eyler of Essex County, New Jersey. Like Wedge, Eyler knows that Satanism is pervasive in the heavy-metal culture, and he is amazed at how blatant the groups are about their religious beliefs. "Just look at the names of the groups," he says. "The Grateful Dead, Lynyrd Skynyrd, KISS"—at least one of which is indeed a heavy-metal band. "They are obviously Satanic in origin," insists Eyler. "People who listen to the Grateful Dead are called Deadheads. Their symbol is the skull. They have quite a large following. KISS stands for Knights in Service to Satan."

Wedge also informs his men about pa-

gans, by which he generally means Wiccans—New Age-ish people who follow a pre-Christian belief system based on Druidic and Celtic rituals. While they're not to be trusted, says Wedge, pagans generally aren't criminals. To assist the officers in this area, Wedge makes sure they buy books from him during the breaks, such as Anna Riva's *Candle Burning Magic*. The point is to know who uses what kind of candle, kitchen knife or symbolic trinket in their rituals—so officers can identify them at crime scenes. Some cult cops, including Wedge and Griffis, make use of a "pagan informant" named Feather back in Ohio. Wedge has pictures of one of the summer-solstice ceremonies Feather invited him to—the one where it began to rain, he digresses, and Wedge suddenly had a foaming crown of white bubbles on his head because that morning he had mistaken shampoo concentrate for his Brylcreem. "I looked like I had rabies of the head!"

After the officers have learned the differences between Satanic and pagan altars, Wedge drills them. One slide displays a makeshift altar on a coffee table in somebody's low-rent plywood bedroom. Various candles, paring knives and books adorn the setup. "Paganism or Satanism?" Wedge asks his pupils. A tentative hand goes up. "Uh, paganism?" one fellow says meekly. The instructor turns auctioneer, his bulk swaying as he shuffles from foot to foot. "Got a man who says pagan. Any other takers?" "I'd have to agree with paganism, Tom," an officer throws out. "No!" booms Wedge. "It's Satanism."

Wedge glares around the room and points with his stick to a purple candle on the altar. "Go to your candle-burning book. What does purple stand for?" Somebody clears his throat, pauses, then reads aloud: "Well...ambition, strength, honor, dignity and power." "Right," Wedge says. "Cross out all the others—it's power. And what do Satanists want?" "Power," the class chimes. Wedge nods his head. "There you are."

When Tom Wedge's course is over, the officers get a "diploma" certifying that they are fully trained in occult-crime investigation. "Now I know," says a newly credentialed cult cop from Maryland, "that the graffiti I saw on a wall a few months back was Satanic." Which means that if he ever sees it again, well, he will know. ☐

## NEW WORLD

### ORDER:

# CHAOS

*Is there no middle ground between*

*Novosibirsk Inc. and gibberish?*

BY ROY BLOUNT JR.

Just when this country seems to be settling into permanent goofy Republicanism, the rest of the world is—well, as goofy Republicans see it, I suppose, the rest of the world is advancing toward goofy Republicanism. What I was going to say, more conservatively, is that the world is undergoing extraordinary change.

The winds of orderliness have caught up Nicaragua. The Iron Curtain flaps in a wild and crazy breeze. By the time you read this, everyone from Tbilisi to Petropavlovsk will be applying for Amway distributorships, and, I don't know, Afrikaners will have started a Back to Harlem movement. For the geopolitical implications, see the answers page. What I'd like to consider here is, can all this be explained in terms of chaos theory?

At a dinner party I attended recently, it came out that nearly everyone present had a copy of *Chaos: Making a New Science*, by James Gleick. There was a general vagueness as to whether any of us had actually read it, but most of us had looked at the illustrations, lustrous multicolor images of more or less paisley phenomena ("the Mandelbrot set," "the Great Red Spot: real and simulated") as graphicized by computers, somehow or other.

What these illustrations show, unless I haven't got this right, is that the underlying pattern of all nature is chaos. When we realize everything is arbitrary and random, everything falls into place.

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This, as my old mother used to say, doesn't make any more sense to me than the man on the moon. But then, *neither does anything else anymore*. So there you have it. It wouldn't surprise me to find that if I just started twiddling my fingers on these computer keys unsystematically, I would hook into something far more fundamental than usual.

I'm getting ready to. Any minute now.

Okay.

Wait a minute.

Okay.

aiufopaijfgohjghjeojepio

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I feel *silly*. I mean... Okay, okay.

Okay.

ljk8s

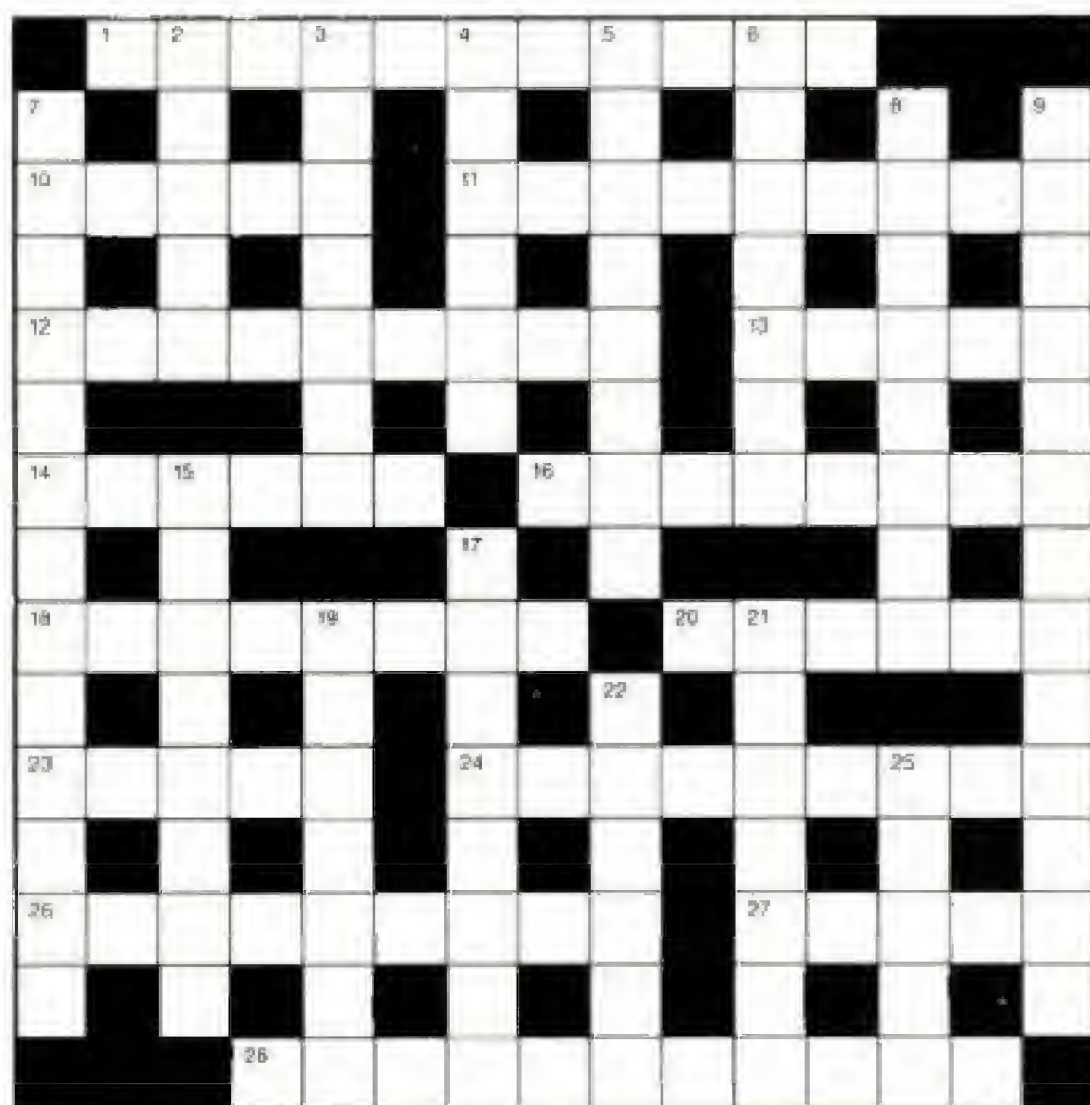
No, wait, I wasn't ready.

Now I am. Here goes.

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aaq3u8yhggq8o4tjqipasgrwtoahheartthats



than any oil slick?

Because his computer has a screw loose, would be my assessment. "The Great Red Spot: real and simulated." Give me a break. Communism is going down the tubes and chaos theory comes up with a great red spot. If this computer really knew where Chaos Central was, it would be drawing the Almighty Dollar, the Great Ten Spot: real and simulated.

Don't get me wrong. Give me, or even lend me, the dollar over the ruble any day. I have long recognized that communism is too moral to be lively. Under communism, injustice has to be imposed, and everyone scowls or sulks. Under capitalism, chicanery bubbles up like a wild, natural thing.

Would it be too...structured of me, though, to wonder whether capitalism doesn't need to have a little something imposed on it? Eighties Republicans cut capitalism so much slack... Okay, there's a new demand for capital now from Lvov to Komsomolsk, and Marx is turning over in his grave. But we owe so much already, aren't we going to have to borrow some more capital somewhere in order to have any to lend?

I suppose computers will simulate the needful in some way that I am too orderly to understand. Maybe the Great Red Spot is debt (or the Rising Sun). What the heck. After all, this nation began with tea leaves dumped into Boston Harbor. And this administration owes a great deal to pollution in Boston Harbor. And...

I'm just free-associating. Exercising my birthright. Albanians will be doing it soon.

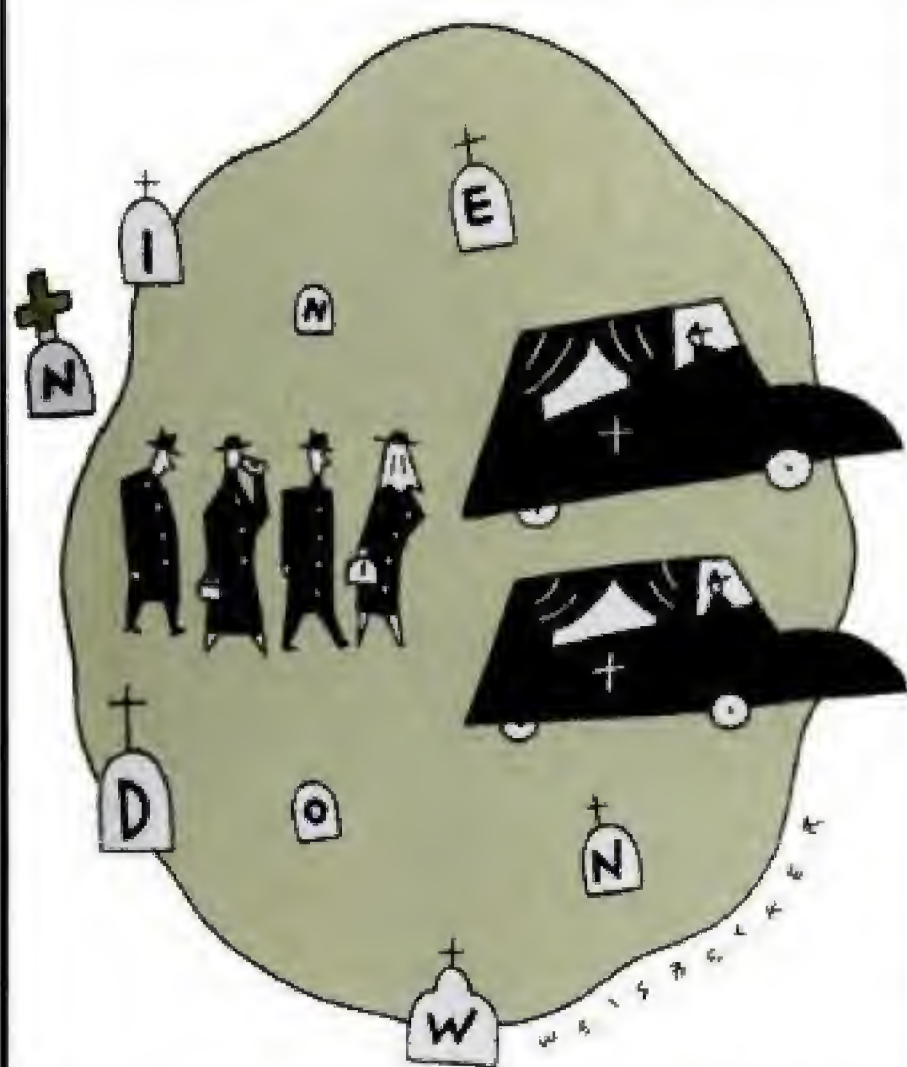
## ACROSS

1. In Russia this class may have to find new jobs, for a horse. (11)
10. A piano concealed a plant louse. (5)
11. Something you can do in a pot—what doves do to Kansas street, east-west. (4,1,4)
12. How long will they keep on calling it the Union of Soviet \_\_\_\_\_ Republics? (9)
13. In Mexico, Mickey is a jokester. (5)
14. Murder and put in place to counterbalance. (6)
16. Soldier's equipment disordered? Rage, Mary. (4,4)
18. Pleasantries confront it backward, each the same way. (8)
20. Additional gold for Jeanne of *Jules et Jim*. (6)
23. Pilot formerly a bull. (5)
24. Put frost in crate to get level of illegality. (5,4)
26. Big hand envelops Uncle Leon initially for producing eggs. (9)
27. Ivana's baby is square. (5)
28. Manute Bol can't find the range? He *still* distrusts Russia. (4,7)

## DOWN

2. And this, in Latin, is a good principle. (5)
3. Fred flipping his lid over high card—what a Communist has now. (3,4)
4. Into South Carolina whirls a warning. (6)
5. Cocks blown roses to right. (8)
6. Mischievous in any state of disorder. (7)
7. What Mike Dukakis went home to: large-scale 6. (4,9)
8. Pressed down in Southeast, herd goes wild. (8)
9. Bi-vehicular obsequies could be 15 by a bad organizer. (3-3,7)
15. Screwed down, turned around, and bungled. (6,2)
17. Boy! Sexist person supported by offspring. (3,5)
19. Twister's right messy and inside, too. (7)
21. Exceeding the standard, rover is off around Pennsylvania. (4,3)
22. Famous Nicaraguan uses breath spray wrong. (6)
25. Two states go down in Tex-Mex massacre. (5)

Answers appear on page 98.



Oh, great. I just hit something, who knows what, that caused my computer screen to flash me the following message: KEY CODE DOES NOT EXIST. SEE STYLE SHEET FOR VALID KEY CODES.

What is this "valid" stuff? What is this "does not exist"? How come, when Gleick tells *his* computer to go wild, it draws luminous whorly stuff, prettier





▲ Time Warner conquistador Steve Ross isn't just an entertainment mogul: he *is* entertainment. Dancing like a maniac and playing a mean air guitar at the same time—what would you call that but... *synergy*! (1,2) Having just mentally ripped through a blistering guitar solo, Ross (3) whispers a few dance-floor sweet nothings to his partner before (4) making his bold switch to air maracas.



◀ **SPOOKY** A famous publishing-industry ghost story continues: the Incredible Creeping Hand of Warren Hoge, the once-liked-and-respected *New York Times* assistant managing editor, here moving steadily toward Lynn Stein at the Citizens Committee for N.Y.C. dinner for Steve Ross at the Waldorf.

**BUG IN A RUG** While pretending to enjoy some small talk with Carol Sulzberger, his boss's wife, the *Times's* Hoge steals a glance at City Council President Andrew Stein's absolutely lifelike hairpiece, taking mental notes on the ever-more-personally-pressing problem of suitable headwear. ▶



**I'M WITH VACLAV** At the Actors Studio reception for Czech president Vaclav Havel: What would a reception for an Eastern European intellectual and head of state be without those well-known Czech-political-theater enthusiasts Paul Simon, Marsha Mason and Keith Hernandez?



**EYES ON THE PRIZE** What is the source of fishiest-guy-in-the-art-world Larry Gagosian's unlikely charisma? It's in the eyes: talking shop with fellow dealer John Berggruen at The Art Show at the Park Avenue Armory uptown, and listening to *New Yorker* advertising employee Glenn Pagan at a party downtown, Gagosian wears the transcendent, heaven-directed expression he affects whenever he talks about Art.



**THE NINETIES IN A NUTSHELL** An unlikely guest at the MacLaren Children's Center Celebrity Day brunch at Henry Winkler's Toluca Lake, California, house, Mike Milken entertains kids, photographers and unindicted celebrities alike with his mime act.







**SCHUSS** Genial zhlub novelist Kurt Vonnegut and his wife, tightly wound photographer Jill Krementz, try out their new trailer-park-in-Aspen look at the movies.

## INTERACTIVE CELEBRITY PHOTOGRAPHY 101 (1)

After expending considerable energy pretending to avoid our photographer at a fundraising cocktail party



on Fifth Avenue, former beauty-parlor owner Jon Peters (here with a cosmetics model), an adherent of the black-



T-shirt-under-everything fashion code, finally gave in and faced the camera. The actual magic words that pro-

duced the about-face? *Mr. Peters, you're so handsome.* (2) Though the same catcall failed to convince less credulous but more villainous investment banker Bruce Wasserstein at an art-world function, the compliment did seem to engage his wife, Christine.

## PARTY POOP



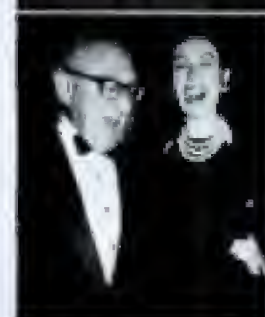
**HOTTER THAN THE LAMBADA?** Teasing your hair and wearing a loud Hawaiian floral-print waistcoat and a phony Purple Heart is simply not enough anymore. At a benefit for the School of American Ballet, Noël-Coward-manqué-for-hire Christopher Mason employs a surefire two-step strategy (an old boarding-school trick?) to attract attention: he dances vigorously with a *womanly* woman wearing a strapless dress, making sure to (1) lift her arms high in the air and (2) convince her to do the twist while bending deeply at the waist.



**AMAZON ON THE HALF SHELL** At the Council of Fashion Designers of America awards ceremony, scary bodybuilder Grace Jones opens wide and shows off Issey Miyake's new futuristic-mollusk look.



▼ **WAIST NOT** While his chronically (and thoughtfully) stooped wife, designer Carolyn Roehm, feeds what she considers to be shreds of amusing society trivia to *New York* magazine's de facto gossip writer, Michael Gross, itty-bitty LBO billionaire Henry Kravis puts a tiny arm around Roehm's hips, being physically unable to reach gracefully as high as her waist—a maneuver that even dinky social climber Henry Kissinger (*inset*) can manage easily.





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